

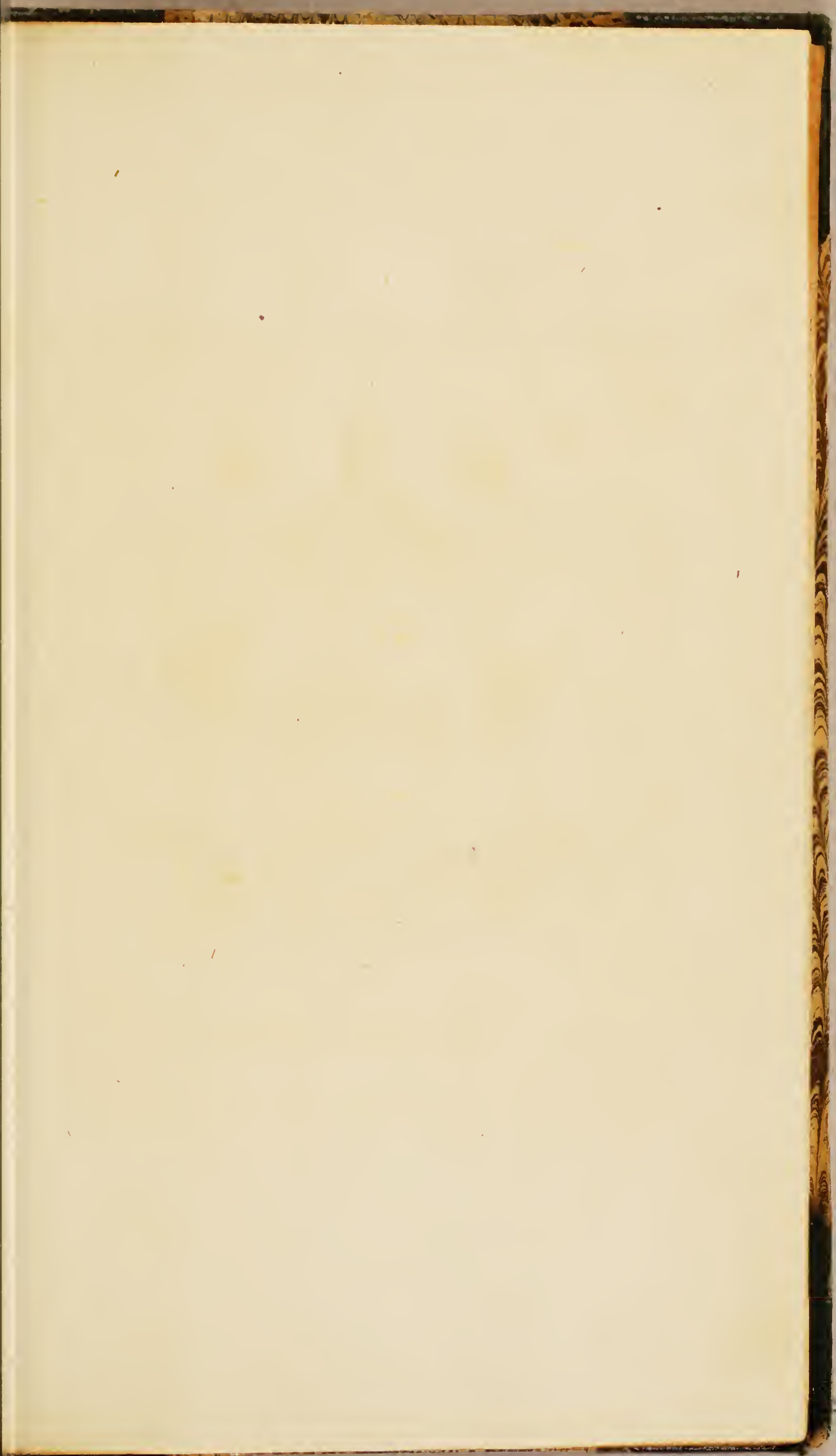




M. 9 a



John Carter Brown.



84754





SOME  
HISTORICAL ACCOUNT  
OF  
GUINEA.

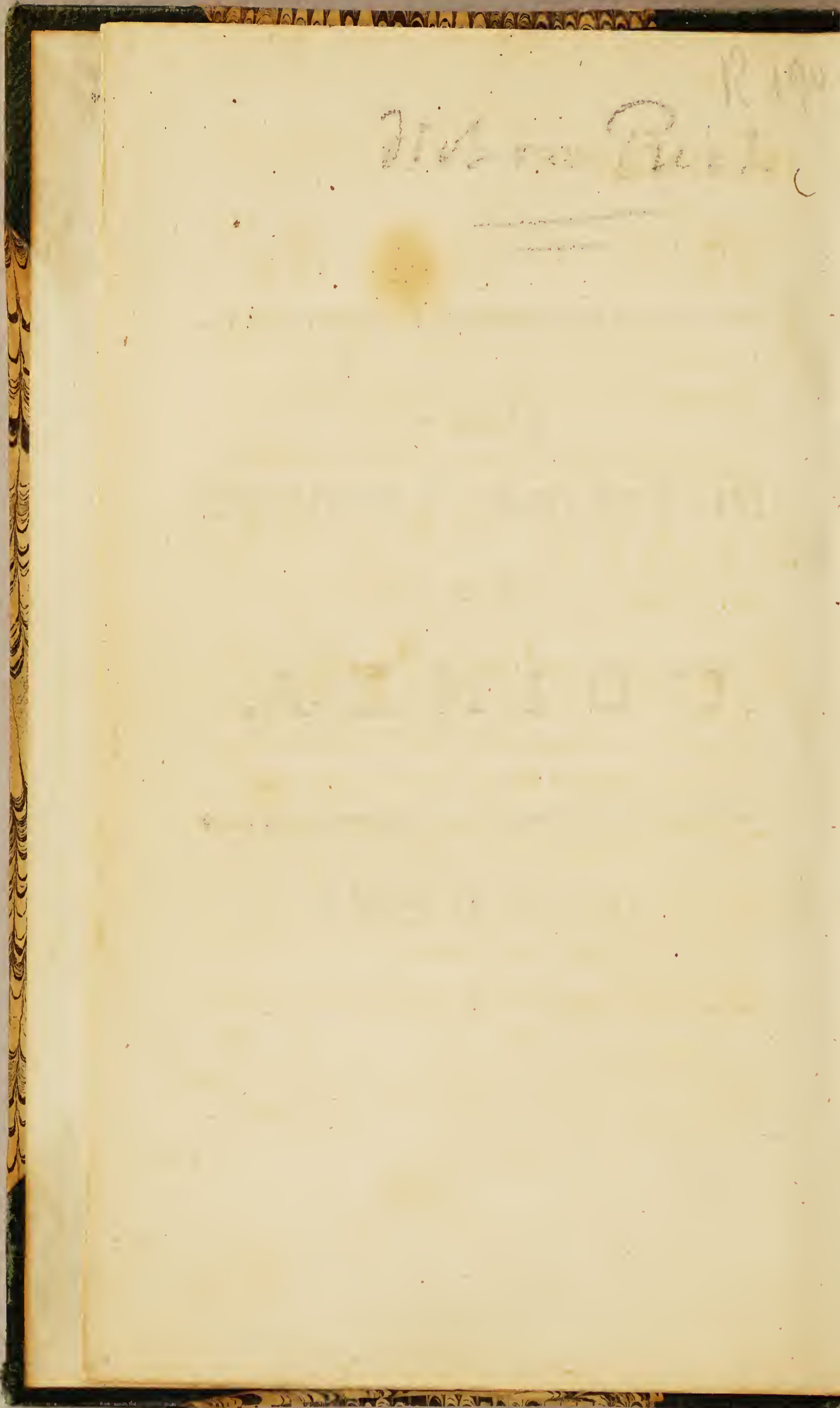


[ PRICE 2s. 6d. stitched. ]



R 190

Wm. B. B. B.





SOME  
HISTORICAL ACCOUNT  
OF  
GUINEA,  
ITS  
SITUATION, PRODUCE, and the general  
DISPOSITION of its INHABITANTS.

WITH  
An Inquiry into the RISE and PROGRESS  
OF THE  
SLAVE TRADE,  
Its NATURE, and lamentable EFFECTS.

ALSO  
A REPUBLICATION of the Sentiments of  
several Authors of Note on this interesting  
Subject: Particularly an Extract of a  
Treatise written by GRANVILLE SHARPE.

---

By ANTHONY BENEZET.

---

ACTS xvii. 24, 26. GOD, *that made the world—hath  
made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all  
the face of the earth, and hath determined the—bounds of  
their habitation.*

---

PHILADELPHIA: Printed MDCCCLXXI.

LONDON: Re-printed, and sold by W. OWEN, near  
Temple-bar; and E. and C. DILLY, in the Poultry.

---

MDCCCLXXII.



JOHN CATER BROWN



---

---

# CONTENTS.

## CHAPTER I.

*A GENERAL account of Guinea; particularly those parts on the rivers Senegal and Gambia. Page 1*

## CHAP. II.

*Account of the Ivory-Coast, the Gold-Coast and the Slave-Coast. 17*

## CHAP. III.

*Of the kingdoms of Benin, Kongo and Angola. 35*

## CHAP. IV.

*Guinea, first discovered and subdued by the Arabians. The Portuguese make descents on the coast, and carry off the natives. Oppression of the Indians: De la Casa pleads their cause. 41*

## CHAP. V.

*The English's first trade to the coast of Guinea: Violently carry off some of the Negroes. 52*

## CHAP. VI.

*Slavery more tolerable under Pagans and  
a Turks*

C O N T E N T S.

*Turks than in the colonies. As christianity prevailed, ancient slavery declined.* 63

C H A P. VII.

*Montesquieu's sentiments of slavery. Morgan Godwyn's advocacy on behalf of Negroes and Indians, &c.* 72

C H A P. VIII.

*Grievous treatment of the Negroes in the colonies, &c.* 85

C H A P. IX.

*Desire of gain the true motive of the Slave trade. Misrepresentation of the state of the Negroes in Guinea.* 96

C H A P. X.

*State of the Government in Guinea, &c.* 105

C H A P. XI.

*Accounts of the cruel methods used in carrying on of the Slave trade, &c.* 111

C H A P. XII.

*Extracts of several voyages to the coast of Guinea, &c.* 118

C H A P. XIII.

*Numbers of Negroes, yearly brought from Guinea, by the English, &c.* 128

C H A P.



C O N T E N T S.

C H A P. XIV.

*Observations on the situation and disposition of the Negroes in the northern colonies, &c.* 132

C H A P. XV.

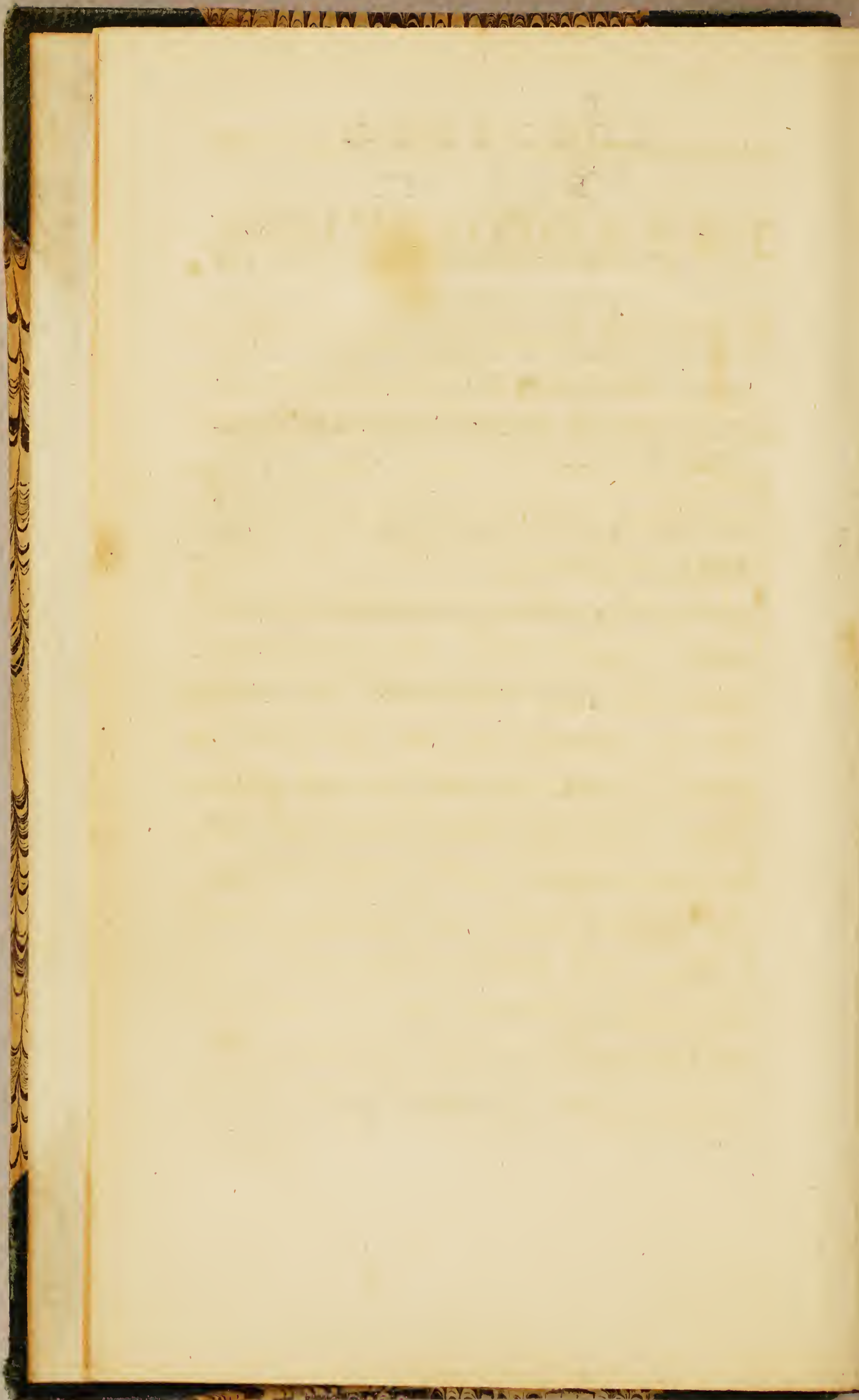
*Europeans capable of bearing reasonable labour in the West Indies, &c.* 141

*Extracts from Granville Sharp's representations, &c.*

*Sentiments of several authors, viz. George Wallace, Francis Hutcheson, and James Foster.*

*Extracts of an address to the assembly of Virginia.*

*Extract of the bishop of Gloucester's sermon.*





---

## INTRODUCTION.

**T**HE slavery of the Negroes having, of late, drawn the attention of many serious minded people; several tracts have been published setting forth its inconsistency with every christian and moral virtue, which it is hoped will have weight with the judicious; especially at a time when the liberties of mankind are become so much the subject of general attention. For the satisfaction of the serious enquirer who may not have the opportunity of seeing those tracts, and such others who are sincerely desirous that the iniquity of this practice may become effectually apparent, to those in whose power



power it may be to put a stop to any farther progress therein; it is proposed, hereby, to republifh the moft material parts of faid tracts: and in order to enable the reader to form a true judgment of this matter, which, tho' fo very important, is generally difregarded, or fo artfully misrepresented by thofe whose interest leads them to vindicate it, as to bias the opinions of people otherwise upright; fome account will be here given of the different parts of Africa, from which the Negroes are brought to America; with an impartial relation from what motives the Europeans were firft induced to undertake, and have fince continued this iniquitous traffic. And here it will not be improper to premise, that  
tho'



tho' wars, arising from the common depravity of human nature, have happened, as well among the Negroes as other nations, and the weak sometimes been made captives to the strong; yet nothing appears, in the various relations of the intercourse and trade for a long time carried on by the Europeans on that coast, which would induce us to believe, that there is any real foundation for that argument, so commonly advanced in vindication of that trade, viz. *“ That the slavery of the Negroes took its rise from a desire, in the purchasers, to save the lives of such of them as were taken captives in war, who would otherwise have been sacrificed to the implacable revenge of their conquerors.”*

A plea

A plea which when compared with the history of those times, will appear to be destitute of Truth; and to have been advanced, and urged, principally by such as were concerned in reaping the gain of this infamous traffic, as a palliation of that, against which their own reason and conscience must have raised fearful objections.

Some



---

Some Historical Account, &c.

C H A P. I.

GUINEA affords an easy living to its inhabitants, with but little toil. The climate agrees well with the natives, but extremely unhealthful to the Europeans. Produces provisions in the greatest plenty. Simplicity of their householdry. The coast of Guinea described from the river Senegal to the kingdom of Angola. The fruitfulness of that part lying on and between the two great rivers Senegal and Gambia. Account of the different nations settled there. Order of government amongst the Jalofs. Good account of some of the Fulis. The Mandingos; their management, government, &c. Their worship. M. Adanson's account of those countries. Surprizing vegetation. Pleasant appearance of the country. He found the natives very sociable and obliging.

WHEN the Negroes are considered barely in their present abject state of slavery, broken-spirited and dejected;  
B and



and too easy credit is given to the accounts we frequently hear or read of their barbarous and savage way of living in their own country; we shall be naturally induced to look upon them as incapable of improvement, destitute, miserable, and insensible of the benefits of life; and that our permitting them to live amongst us, even on the most oppressive terms, is to them a favour. But, on impartial enquiry, the case will appear to be far otherwise; we shall find that there is scarce a country in the whole world, that is better calculated for affording the necessary comforts of life to its inhabitants, with less solicitude and toil, than Guinea. And that notwithstanding the long converse of many of its inhabitants with (often) the worst of the Europeans, they still retain a great deal of innocent simplicity; and, when not stirred up to revenge from the frequent abuses they have received from the Europeans in general, manifest themselves to be a humane, sociable people, whose faculties are as capable of improvement as those of other Men; and that their œconomy and government is, in many respects, commendable. Hence it appears they might have lived happy, if not disturbed by the Europeans; more especially, if these last had used such endeavours as their christian profession requires, to communicate to the ignorant Africans that superior  
knowledge



knowledge which Providence had favoured them with. In order to set this matter in its true light, and for the information of those well-minded people who are desirous of being fully acquainted with the merits of a cause, which is of the utmost consequence; as therein the lives and happiness of thousands, and hundreds of thousands, of our fellow *Men* have fallen, and are daily falling, a sacrifice to selfish avarice and usurped power, I will here give some account of the several divisions of those parts of Africa from whence the Negroes are brought, with a summary of their produce; the disposition of their respective inhabitants; their improvements, &c. &c. extracted from authors of credit; mostly such as have been principal officers in the English, French and Dutch factories, and who resided many years in those countries. But first it is necessary to premise, as a remark generally applicable to the whole coast of Guinea, "*That the Almighty, who has determined and appointed the bounds of the habitation of men on the face of the earth,*" in the manner that is most conducive to the well-being of their different natures and dispositions, has so ordered it, that altho' Guinea is extremely unhealthy \*

to

---

\* *Gentleman's Magazine, Supplement, 1763. Extract of a letter wrote from the island of Senegal, by Mr. Boone, practitioner of physick there, to Dr. Brocklesby of London.*



to the Europeans, of whom many thousands have met there with a miserable and untimely

---

“ To form a just idea of the unhealthiness of the climate, it will be necessary to conceive a country extending three hundred leagues East, and more to the North and South. Through this country several large rivers empty themselves into the sea; particularly the Sanaga, Gambia and Sherbro; these, during the rainy months, which begin in July and continue till October, overflow their banks, and lay the whole flat country under water; and indeed, the very sudden rise of these rivers is incredible to persons who have never been within the tropicks, and are unacquainted with the violent rains that fall there. At Galem, nine hundred miles from the mouth of the Sanaga, I am informed that the waters rise one hundred and fifty feet perpendicular from the bed of the river. This information I received from a gentleman, who was surgeon's mate to a party sent there, and the only survivor of three captains command, each consisting of one captain, two lieutenants, one ensign, a surgeon's mate, three serjeants, three corporals, and fifty privates.

“ When the rains are at an end, which usually happens in October, the intense heat of the sun soon dries up the waters which lie on the higher parts of the earth, and the remainder forms lakes of stagnated waters, in which are found all sorts of dead animals: These waters every day decrease, till at last they are quite exhaled, and then the effluvia that arises is almost insupportable. At this season, the winds blow so very hot from off the land, that I can compare them to nothing but the heat proceeding from the mouth of an oven. This occasions the Europeans to be sorely vexed with bilious



untimely end, yet it is not so with the Negroes, who enjoy a good state of health\*, and are able to procure to themselves a comfortable subsistence, with much less care and toil than is necessary in our more northern climate; which last advantage arises not only from the warmth of the climate, but also from the overflowing of the rivers, whereby the land is regularly moistened and rendered extremely fertile; and being in many places improved by culture, abounds with grain and fruits, cattle, poultry, &c. The earth yields all the year a fresh supply of food: Few clothes are requisite, and little art necessary in making them, or in the construction of their houses, which are very simple,

---

“ lious and putrid fevers. From this account you  
 “ will not be surprized, that the total loss of British  
 “ subjects in this island only, amounted to above two  
 “ thousand five hundred, in the space of three years  
 “ that I was there, in such a putrid moist air as I have  
 “ described.”

\* James Barbot, agent general to the French African company, in his account of Africa, page 105, says, “ The natives are seldom troubled with any  
 “ distempers, being little affected with the unhealthy  
 “ air. In tempestuous times they keep much within  
 “ doors; and when exposed to the weather, their skins  
 “ being suppled, and pores closed by daily anointing  
 “ with palm oil, the weather can make but little im-  
 “ pression on them.”



simple, principally calculated to defend them from the tempestuous seasons and wild beasts; a few dry reeds covered with matts serve for their beds. The other furniture, except what belongs to cookery, gives the women but little trouble; the moveables of the greatest among them amounting only to a few earthen pots, some wooden utensils, and gourds or calabashes; from these last, which grow almost naturally over their huts, to which they afford an agreeable shade, they are abundantly stocked with good clean vessels for most household uses, being of different sizes, from half a pint to several gallons.

That part of Africa from which the Negroes are sold to be carried into slavery, commonly known by the name of Guinea, extends along the coast three or four thousand miles. Beginning at the river Senegal, situate about the 17th degree of North latitude, being the nearest part of Guinea, as well to Europe as to North America; from thence to the river Gambia, and in a southerly course to Cape Sierra Leona, comprehends a coast of about seven hundred miles; being the same tract for which Queen Elizabeth granted charters to the first traders to that coast: From Sierra Leona, the land of Guinea takes a turn to the eastward, extending that course about fifteen hundred miles, including



cluding those several divisions known by the name of *the Grain Coast, the Ivory Coast, the Gold Coast, and the Slave Coast, with the large kingdom of Benin.* From thence the land runs southward along the coast about twelve hundred miles, which contains the *kingdoms of Congo and Angola*; there the trade for slaves ends. From which to the southermost Cape of Africa, called the Cape of Good Hope, the country is settled by Caffres and Hottentots, who have never been concerned in the making or selling slaves.

Of the parts which are above described, the first which presents itself to view, is that situate on the great river Senegal, which is said to be navigable more than a thousand miles, and is by travellers described to be very agreeable and fruitful. Andrew Brue, principal factor for the French African company, who lived sixteen years in that country, after describing its fruitfulness and plenty, near the sea, adds\*, “The farther  
 “ you go from the sea, the country on the  
 “ river seems the more fruitful and well im-  
 “ proved; abounding with Indian corn,  
 “ pulse, fruit, &c. Here are vast meadows,  
 “ which feed large herds of great and small  
 “ cattle, and poultry numerous: The vil-  
 “ lages that lie thick on the river, shew the  
 “ country is well peopled.” The same au-  
 thor,

---

\* Astley's collect. vol. 2. page 46.



thor, in the account of a voyage he made up the river Gambia, the mouth of which lies about three hundred miles South of the Senegal, and is navigable about six hundred miles up the country, says\*, “ That he was  
 “ surprized to see the land so well culti-  
 “ vated; scarce a spot lay unimproved; the  
 “ low lands, divided by small canals, were  
 “ all sowed with rice, &c. the higher ground  
 “ planted with millet, Indian corn, and  
 “ pease of different sorts; their beef excel-  
 “ lent; poultry plenty, and very cheap, as  
 “ well as all other necessaries of life.” Francis Moor, who was sent from England about the year 1735, in the service of the African company, and resided at James Fort, on the river Gambia, or in other factories on that river, about five years, confirms the above account of the fruitfulness of the country. William Smith, who was sent in the year 1726, by the African company, to survey their settlements throughout the whole coast of Guinea, † says, “ The country about the  
 “ Gambia is pleasant and fruitful; provisions  
 “ of all kinds being plenty and exceeding  
 “ cheap.” The country on and between the two above-mentioned rivers is large and extensive, inhabited principally by those three Negro nations known by the name of Jalofs, Fulis, and Mandingos. The Jalofs  
 possess

---

\* Astley's collection of voyages, vol. 2, page 86.

† William Smith's voyage to Guinea, page 31, 34.



possess the middle of the country. The Fulis principal settlement is on both sides of the Senegal; great numbers of these people are also mixed with the Mandingos; which last are mostly settled on both sides the Gambia. The government of the Jalofs is represented as under a better regulation than can be expected from the common opinion we entertain of the Negroes. We are told in the Collection, \* “ That the King has under him several ministers of state, who assist him in the exercise of justice. *The grand Jerafo* is the chief justice thro’ all the King’s dominions, and goes in circuit from time to time to hear complaints, and determine controversies. *The King’s treasurer* exercises the same employment, and has under him Alkairs, who are governors of towns or villages. That the *Kondi*, or *Viceroy*, goes the circuit with the chief justice, both to hear causes, and inspect into the behaviour of the *Alkadi*, or chief magistrate of every village in their several districts †.” *Vasconclas*, an author mentioned in the collection, says, The ancientest are preferred to be the *Prince’s counsellors*, who keep always about his person; and the men of most judgment and experience are the judges.”

C

*The*


---

\* Attley’s collection, vol. 2, page 358.

† Idem. 259.



*The Fulis* are settled on both sides of the river *Senegal*: Their country, which is very fruitful and populous, extends near four hundred miles from East to West. They are generally of a deep tawny complexion, appearing to bear some affinity with the Moors, whose country they join on the North: They are good farmers, and make great harvest of corn, cotton, tobacco, &c. and breed great numbers of cattle of all kinds. *Bartholomew Stibbs*, (mentioned by *Fr. Moor*) in his account of that country says, \* “*They were* “ *a cleanly, decent, industrious people, and very* “ *affable.*” But the most particular account we have of these people, is from *Francis Moor* himself, who says \*, “*Some of these* “ *Fuli blacks who dwell on both sides the* “ *river Gambia, are in subjection to the* “ *Mandingos, amongst whom they dwell,* “ *having been probably driven out of their* “ *country by war or famine. They have* “ *chiefs of their own, who rule with much* “ *moderation. Few of them will drink brandy,* “ *or any thing stronger than water and* “ *sugar, being strict Mahometans. Their* “ *form of government goes on easy, be-* “ *cause the people are of a good quiet dis-* “ *position, and so well instructed in what is* “ *right,*

---

\* *Moor's travels into distant parts of Africa, page 198.*

† *Ibid, page 21.*



“ right, that a man who does ill, is the abo-  
 “ mination of all, and none will support  
 “ him against the chief. In these countries,  
 “ the natives are not covetous of land,  
 “ desiring no more than what they use; and  
 “ as they do not plough with horses and  
 “ cattle, they can use but very little, there-  
 “ fore the Kings are willing to give the  
 “ Fulis leave to live in their country, and  
 “ cultivate their lands. If any of their  
 “ people are known to be made slaves, all  
 “ the Fulis will join to redeem them; they  
 “ also support the old, the blind, and lame,  
 “ amongst themselves; and as far as their  
 “ abilities go, they supply the necessities of  
 “ the Mandingos, great numbers of whom  
 “ they have maintained in famine.” *The*  
*author*, from his own observations, says,  
 “ They were rarely angry, and that he never  
 “ heard them abuse one another.”

*The Mandingos* are said by *A. Brue* before  
 mentioned, “ To be the most numerous  
 “ nation on the Gambia, besides which,  
 “ numbers of them are dispersed over all  
 “ these countries; being the most rigid Ma-  
 “ hometans amongst the Negroes, they drink  
 “ neither wine nor brandy, and are politer  
 “ than the other Negroes. The chief of the  
 “ trade goes through their hands. Many are  
 “ industrious and laborious, keeping their  
 “ ground well cultivated, and breeding a



“ good stock of cattle \*. Every town has  
 “ an *Alkadi*, or *Governor*, who has great  
 “ power; for most of them having two  
 “ common fields of clear ground, one for  
 “ corn, and the other for rice, *the Alkadi*  
 “ appoints the labour of all the people.  
 “ The men work the corn ground, and  
 “ the women and girls the rice ground;  
 “ and as they all equally labour, so he  
 “ equally divides the corn amongst them;  
 “ and in case they are in want, the others  
 “ supply them. This *Alkadi* decides all  
 “ quarrels, and has the first voice in all  
 “ conferences in town affairs.” Some of  
 these Mandingos who are settled at Galem,  
 far up the river Senegal, can read and write  
 Arabic tolerably, and are a good hospitable  
 people, who carry on a trade with the in-  
 land nations. “ † They are extremely po-  
 “ pulous in those parts, their women being  
 “ fruitful, and they not suffering any  
 “ person amongst them, but such as are  
 “ guilty of crimes, to be made slaves.” We  
 are told from Jobson, “ ‡ That the Maho-  
 “ metan Negroes say their prayers thrice a day.  
 “ Each village has a priest who calls them to  
 “ their duty. It is surprizing (says the author)  
 “ as well as commendable, to see the modesty,  
 “ attention,

---

\* Astley's collect. vol. 2, page 269.

† Astley's collect. vol. 2, page 73.

‡ Ibid, 296.



“ attention, and reverence they observe during their worship. He asked some of their priests the purport of their prayers and ceremonies; their answer always was, *That they adored God by prostrating themselves before him; that by humbling themselves, they acknowledged their own insignificancy, and farther intreated him to forgive their faults, and to grant them all good and necessary things, as well as deliverance from evil.*”

Jobson takes notice of several good qualities in these Negroe priests, particularly their great sobriety. They gain their livelihood by keeping school for the education of the children. The boys are taught to read and write. They not only teach school, but rove about the country, teaching and instructing, for which the whole country is open to them; and they have a free course through all places, though the Kings may be at war with one another.

The three fore-mentioned nations practise several trades, as smiths, potters, sadlers, and weavers. Their smiths particularly work neatly in gold and silver, and make knives, hatchets, reaping hooks, spades and shares to cut iron, &c. &c. Their potters make neat tobacco pipes, and pots to boil their food. Some authors say that weaving is their principal trade; this is done by the women and girls, who spin and weave very  
fine



fine cotton cloth, which they dye blue or black. \* F. Moor says, the Jalofs particularly make great quantities of the cotton cloth; their pieces are generally twenty-seven yards long, and about nine inches broad, their looms being very narrow; these they sew neatly together, so as to supply the use of broad cloth.

It was in these parts of Guinea, that M. Adanson, correspondent of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, mentioned in some former publications, was employed from the year 1749, to the year 1753, wholly in making *natural* and *philosophical* observations on the country about the rivers Senegal and Gambia. Speaking of the great heats in Senegal, he says, “ † It is to them  
“ that they are partly indebted for the fer-  
“ tility of their lands; which is so great,  
“ that, with little labour and care, there  
“ is no fruit nor grain but grow in great  
“ plenty.”

Of the soil on the Gambia, he says, “ † It  
“ is rich and deep, and amazingly fertile;  
“ it produces spontaneously, and almost  
“ without cultivation, all the necessaries of  
“ life, grain, fruit, herbs, and roots.  
“ Every

---

\* F. Moor, 28.

† M. Adanson's voyage to Senegal, &c. page 308.

‡ Idem, page 164.



“ Every thing matures to perfection, and is  
 “ excellent in its kind.” \* One thing  
 which always surprized him, was the prodi-  
 gious rapidity with which the sap of trees  
 repairs any loss they may happen to sustain in  
 that country: “ And I was never,” says he,  
 “ more astonished, than when landing four  
 “ days after the locusts had devoured  
 “ all the fruits and leaves, and even the  
 “ buds of the trees, to find the trees co-  
 “ vered with new leaves, and they did not  
 “ seem to me to have suffered much.” † “ It  
 “ was then,” says the same author, “ the  
 “ fish season; you might see them in shoals  
 “ approaching towards land. Some of those  
 “ shoals were fifty fathom square, and the  
 “ fish crowded together in such a manner,  
 “ as to roll upon one another, without being  
 “ able to swim. As soon as the Negroes  
 “ perceive them coming towards land, they  
 “ jump into the water with a basket in one  
 “ hand, and swim with the other. They  
 “ need only to plunge and to lift up their  
 “ basket, and they are sure to return loaded  
 “ with fish.” Speaking of the appearance  
 of the country, and of the disposition of  
 the people, he says, ‡ “ Which way soever  
 “ I turned mine eyes on this pleasant spot,  
 “ I beheld a perfect image of pure nature;  
 “ an

---

\* M. Adanson, page 162.

† Idem, page 171.

‡ Ibid, page 54.



“ an agreeable solitude, bounded on every  
 “ side by charming landscapes; the rural  
 “ situation of cottages in the midst of trees;  
 “ the ease and indolence of the Negroes,  
 “ reclined under the shade of their spreading  
 “ foliage; the simplicity of their dress and  
 “ manners; the whole revived in my mind  
 “ the idea of our first parents, and I seemed  
 “ to contemplate the world in its primitive  
 “ state. They are, generally speaking, very  
 “ good-natured, sociable, and obliging. I  
 “ was not a little pleased with this my first  
 “ reception; it convinced me, that there  
 “ ought to be a considerable abatement  
 “ made in the accounts I had read and heard  
 “ every where of the savage character of the  
 “ Africans. I observed both in Negroes and  
 “ Moors, great humanity and sociableness,  
 “ which gave me strong hopes that I should  
 “ be very safe amongst them, and meet with  
 “ the success I desired in my enquiries after  
 “ the curiosities of the country.” \* He  
 was agreeably amused with the conversation  
 of the Negroes, their *fables, dialogues, and*  
*witty stories* with which they entertain each  
 other alternately, according to their custom.  
 Speaking of the remarks which the natives  
 made to him, with relation to the *stars* and  
*planets*, he says, “ It is amazing, that such  
 “ a rude

---

\* Adanson, page 252, *ibid.*



“ a rude and illiterate people, should reason  
 “ so pertinently in regard to those heavenly  
 “ bodies; there is no manner of doubt, but  
 “ that with proper instruments, and a good  
 “ will, they would become *excellent astrono-*  
 “ *mers.*”

---

## C H A P. II.

*THE Ivory Coast*; its soil and produce. The character of the *natives* misrepresented by some authors. These misrepresentations occasioned by *the Europeans* having treacherously carried off many of their people. *John Smith*, surveyor to the *African company*, his observations thereon. *John Snock's* remarks. *The Gold Coast*, and *Slave Coast*, these have the most *European factories*, and furnish the greatest number of slaves to *the Europeans*. Exceeding fertile. The country of *Axim*, and of *Ante*. Good account of the *inland people*. Great fishery. Extraordinary trade for slaves. *The Slave Coast*. *The kingdom of Whidah*. Fruitful and pleasant. The natives kind and obliging. Very populous. Keep regular markets and fairs. Good order therein. Murder, adultery, and theft severely punished. The King's reve-

D

nues.



nues. The principal people have an idea of the true God. Commendable care of the poor. Several small governments depend on *plunder* and the *slave* trade.

**T**HAT part of Guinea known by the name of the *Grain*, and *Ivory Coast*, comes next in course. This coast extends about five hundred miles. The soil appears by account, to be in general fertile, producing abundance of rice and roots; indigo and cotton thrive without cultivation, and tobacco would be excellent, if carefully manufactured; they have fish in plenty; their flocks greatly increase, and their trees are loaded with fruit. They make a cotton cloth, which sells well on the Coast. In a word, the country is rich, and the commerce advantageous, and might be greatly augmented by such as would cultivate the friendship of the natives. These are represented by some writers as a rude, *treacherous people*, whilst several other *authors* of credit give them a very different character, representing them as *sensible, courteous, and the fairest traders on the coast of Guinea*. In the Collection, they are said \* to be averse to drinking to excess, and such as do, are severely punished by the King's order:

---

\* Collection, vol. 2, page 560.



order: On enquiry why there is such a disagreement in the character given of these people, it appears, that though they are naturally inclined to be *kind to strangers*, with whom they are *fond of trading*, yet the *frequent injuries* done them by Europeans, have occasioned their being *suspicious and shy*: The same cause has been the occasion of the ill treatment they have sometimes given to innocent strangers, who have attempted to trade with them. As the Europeans have no settlement on this part of Guinea, the trade is carried on by signals from the ships, on the appearance of which the natives usually come on board in their canoes, bringing their gold-dust, ivory, &c. which has given opportunity to some villainous Europeans to carry them off with their effects, or retain them on board till a ransom is paid. It is noted by some, that since the European voyagers have carried away several of these people, their mistrust is so great, that it is very difficult to prevail on them to come on board. *William Smith* remarks, “ \* As we past  
 “ along this coast, we very often lay be-  
 “ fore a town, and fired a gun for the na-  
 “ tives to come off, but no soul came  
 “ near us; at length we learnt by some  
 “ ships that were trading down the coast,  
 D 2 “ that

---

\* W. Smith, page 111.



“ that the natives came seldom on board  
 “ an English ship, for fear of being de-  
 “ tained or carried off; yet at last some  
 “ ventured on board; but if these chanced  
 “ to spy any arms, they would all immedi-  
 “ ately take to their canoes, and make the  
 “ best of their way home. They had then  
 “ in their possession one *Benjamin Cross*, the  
 “ mate of an English vessel, who was de-  
 “ tained by them to make reprisals for  
 “ some of their men, who had formerly  
 “ been carried away by some English vessel.”  
 In the Collection we are told, \* *This villain-  
 ous custom is too often practised, chiefly by the  
 Bristol and Liverpool ships, and is a great de-  
 triment to the slave trade on the windward  
 coast. John Snock, mentioned in Bosman †, when  
 on that coast, wrote, “ We cast anchor, but  
 “ not one Negro coming on board, I went on  
 “ shore, and after having staid a while on  
 “ the strand, some Negroes came to me; and  
 “ being desirous to be informed why they  
 “ did not come on board, I was answered,  
 “ that about two months before, the English  
 “ had been there with two large vessels,  
 “ and had ravaged the country, destroyed  
 “ all their canoes, plundered their houses,  
 “ and carried off some of their people, upon  
 “ which*

---

\* Astley's collection, vol. 2, page 475.

† W. Bosman's description of Guinea, page 440.



“ which the remainder fled to the inland  
 “ country, where most of them were at  
 “ that time; so that there being not much  
 “ to be done by us, we were obliged to  
 “ return on board. \* When I enquired  
 “ after their wars with other countries,  
 “ they told me they were not often troubled  
 “ with them; but if any difference hap-  
 “ pened, they chose rather to end the dif-  
 “ pute amicably, than to come to arms. †”  
 He found the inhabitants civil and good-  
 natured. Speaking of the *King of Rio Sestro*,  
 lower down the coast, he says, “ He was a  
 “ very agreeable, obliging man, and that  
 “ all his subjects are civil, as well as very  
 “ laborious in agriculture, and the pursuits  
 “ of trade.” *Marchais* says, ‡ “ That  
 “ though the country is very populous,  
 “ yet none of the natives (except criminals)  
 “ are sold for slaves.” *Vaillant* never  
 heard of any settlement being made by  
 the Europeans on this part of *Guinea*; and  
*Smith* remarks, || “ That these coasts, which  
 “ are divided into several little kingdoms,  
 “ and have seldom any wars, is the reason  
 “ the slave trade is not so good here as on  
 “ *the Gold and Slave Coast*, where the Euro-  
 “ peans

---

\* *W. Bosman's description of Guinea*, page 439.

† *Ibid*, 441. ‡ *Afley's collection*, vol. 2, page 565.

|| *Smith's voyage to Guinea*, page 112.



\* peans have several forts and factories." A plain evidence this, that it is the intercourse with the Europeans, and their settlements on the coast, which gives life to the slave trade.

Next adjoining to the *Ivory Coast*, are those called the *Gold Coast*, and the *Slave Coast*; authors are not agreed about their bounds, but their extent together along the coast may be about five hundred miles. And as the policy, produce, and œconomy of these two kingdoms of Guinea are much the same, I shall describe them together.

Here the Europeans have the greatest number of forts and factories, from whence, by means of the Negro factors, a trade is carried on above seven hundred miles back in the inland country; whereby great numbers of slaves are procured, as well by means of the wars which arise amongst the Negroes, or are fomented by the Europeans, as those brought from the back country. Here we find the natives *more reconciled to the European manners and trade*; but, at the same time, *much more inured to war*, and ready to assist the European traders in procuring loadings for the great number of vessels which come yearly on those coasts for slaves. This part of Guinea is agreed by historians to be, in general, *extraordinary fruitful and agreeable*; producing (according to the  
difference



difference of the soil) vast quantities of rice and other grain; plenty of fruit and roots; palm wine and oil, and fish in great abundance, with much tame and wild cattle. Bosman, principal factor for the Dutch at D'Elmina, speaking of the country of Axim, which is situate towards the beginning of the Gold Coast, says \*, “ The Negro inhabitants are generally very rich, driving a great trade with the Europeans for gold: That they are industriously employed either in trade, fishing, or agriculture; but chiefly in the culture of rice, which grows here in an incredible abundance, and is transported hence all over the Gold Coast. The inhabitants, in lieu, returning full fraught with millet, jamms, potatoes, and palm oil.” The same author speaking of the country of Ante, says †, “ This country, as well as the Gold Coast, abounds with hills, enriched with extraordinary high and beautiful trees; its valleys, betwixt the hills, are wide and extensive, producing in great abundance very good rice, millet, jamms, potatoes, and other fruits, all good in their kind.” He adds, “ In short, it is a land that yields its manurers as plentiful a crop as they can wish, with great quantities of palm wine and  
“ oil,

---

\* Bosman's description of the coast of Guinea, p. 5.

† Idem, page 14.



“ oil, besides being well furnished with all  
 “ sorts of tame, as well as wild beasts; but  
 “ that the last fatal wars had reduced it to  
 “ a miserable condition, and stripped it of  
 “ most of its inhabitants.” The adjoining  
 country of Fetu, he says \*, “ was formerly  
 “ so powerful and populous, that it struck  
 “ terror into all the neighbouring nations;  
 “ but it is at present so drained by continual  
 “ wars, that it is entirely ruined; there  
 “ does not remain inhabitants sufficient to  
 “ till the country, tho’ it is so fruitful and  
 “ pleasant that it may be compared to the  
 “ country of Ante just before described;  
 “ frequently, says that author, when walk-  
 “ ing through it before the last war, I have  
 “ seen it abound with fine well built and po-  
 “ pulous towns, agreeably enriched with  
 “ vast quantities of corn, cattle, palm wine,  
 “ and oil. The inhabitants all applying  
 “ themselves without any distinction to agri-  
 “ culture; some sow corn, others press oil,  
 “ and draw wine from palm trees, with both  
 “ which it is plentifully stored.”

William Smith gives much the same ac-  
 count of the before-mentioned parts of the  
 Gold Coast, and adds, “ The country about  
 “ D’Elmina and Cape Coast, is much  
 “ the same for beauty and goodness, but  
 “ more populous; and the nearer we come  
 “ towards

---

\* Bosman, page 41.



“ towards the Slave Coast, the more de-  
 “ lightful and rich all the countries are,  
 “ producing all sorts of trees, fruits, roots,  
 “ and herbs, that grow within the Torrid  
 “ Zone.” J. Barbot also remarks\*, with  
 respect to the countries of Ante and Adom,  
 “ That the soil is very good and fruitful  
 “ in corn and other produce, which it  
 “ affords in such plenty, that besides what  
 “ serves for their own use, they always ex-  
 “ port great quantities for sale; they have  
 “ a competent number of cattle, both tame  
 “ and wild, and the rivers abundantly stored  
 “ with fish, so that nothing is wanting for  
 “ the support of life, and to make it easy.”  
 In the Collection it is said †, “ That the in-  
 “ land people on that part of the coast,  
 “ employ themselves in tillage and trade,  
 “ and supply the market with corn, fruit,  
 “ and palm wine; the country producing  
 “ such vast plenty of Indian corn, that abun-  
 “ dance is daily exported, as well by Euro-  
 “ peans as Blacks resorting thither from  
 “ other parts.” “ These inland people  
 “ are said to live in great union and friend-  
 “ ship, being generally well tempered,  
 “ civil, and tractable; not apt to shed  
 “ human blood, except when much pro-  
 “ voked, and ready to assist one another.”

E

In

---

\* John Barbot's description of Guinea, page 154.

† Astley's collect. vol. 2. page 535.



In the Collection\* it is said, “ That the  
 “ fishing business is esteemed on the Gold  
 “ Coast next to trading; that those who  
 “ profess it are more numerous than those  
 “ of other employments. That the greatest  
 “ number of these are at Kommendo, Mina,  
 “ and Kormantin; from each of which pla-  
 “ ces, there go out every morning, (Tues-  
 “ day excepted, which is the Fetish day, or  
 “ day of rest) five, six, and sometimes eight  
 “ hundred canoes, from thirteen to fourteen  
 “ feet long, which spread themselves two  
 “ leagues at sea, each fisherman carrying in  
 “ his canoe a sword, with bread, water, and  
 “ a little fire on a large stone to roast fish.  
 “ Thus they labour till noon, when the sea  
 “ breeze blowing fresh, they return on the  
 “ shore, generally laden with fish; a quantity  
 “ of which the inland inhabitants come down  
 “ to buy, which they sell again at the country  
 “ markets.”

William Smith says †, “ The country about  
 “ Acra, where the English and Dutch have  
 “ each a strong fort, is very delightful, and  
 “ the natives courteous and civil to strangers.”  
 He adds, “ That this place seldom fails  
 “ of an extraordinary good trade from the  
 “ inland country, especially for slaves,  
 “ whereof

---

\* Collection, vol. 2, page 640.

† William Smith, page 135.



“ whereof several are supposed to come from  
 “ very remote parts, because it is not un-  
 “ common to find a Malayan or two amongst  
 “ a parcel of other slaves: The Malaya  
 “ people are generally natives of Malacca,  
 “ in the East Indies, situate several thousand  
 “ miles from the Gold Coast.” They dif-  
 fer very much from the Guinea Negroes,  
 being of a tawny complexion, with long black  
 hair.

Most parts of the Slave Coasts are repre-  
 sented as equally fertile and pleasant with  
 the Gold Coast: The kingdom of Whidah  
 has been particularly noted by travellers.  
 \* William Smith and Bosman agree, “ That  
 “ it is one of the most delightful countries  
 “ in the world. The great number and  
 “ variety of tall, beautiful, and shady trees,  
 “ which seem planted in groves; the ver-  
 “ dant fields every where cultivated, and no  
 “ otherwise divided than by those groves,  
 “ and in some places a small foot-path, to-  
 “ gether with a great number of villages,  
 “ contribute to afford the most delightful  
 “ prospect; the whole country being a fine,  
 “ easy, and almost imperceptible ascent, for  
 “ the space of forty or fifty miles from the sea.  
 “ That the farther you go from the sea, the  
 “ more beautiful and populous the country  
 “ appears. That the natives were kind

E 2

“ and

---

\* Smith, page 194. Bosman, page 310.



“ and obliging, and so industrious, that no  
 “ place which was thought fertile, could  
 “ escape being planted, even within the hedges  
 “ which inclose their villages. And that the  
 “ next day after they had reaped, they sowed  
 “ again.”

Snelgrave also says, “ The country ap-  
 “ pears full of towns and villages; and be-  
 “ ing a rich soil, and well cultivated, looks  
 “ like an entire garden.” In the Collection\*,  
 the husbandry of the Negroes is described  
 to be carried on with great regularity: “ The  
 “ rainy season approaching, they go into the  
 “ fields and woods, to fix on a proper place  
 “ for sowing; and as here is no property in  
 “ ground, the King’s licence being obtained,  
 “ the people go out in troops, and first  
 “ clear the ground from bushes and weeds,  
 “ which they burn. The field thus cleared,  
 “ they dig it up a foot deep, and so let it  
 “ remain for eight or ten days, till the rest  
 “ of their neighbours have disposed their  
 “ ground in the same manner. They then  
 “ consult about sowing, and for that end  
 “ assemble at the King’s Court the next  
 “ Fetish day. The King’s grain must be  
 “ sown first. They then go again to the  
 “ field, and give the ground a second  
 “ digging, and sow their seed. Whilst  
 “ the

---

\* Collection, vol. 2, page 651.



“ the King or Governor’s land is sowing,  
 “ he sends out wine and flesh ready dressed,  
 “ enough to serve the labourers. After-  
 “ wards, they in like manner sow the  
 “ ground allotted for their neighbours, as  
 “ diligently as that of the King’s, by whom  
 “ they are also feasted; and so continue to  
 “ work in a body for the public benefit,  
 “ till every man’s ground is tilled and sowed.  
 “ None but the King, and a few great men,  
 “ are exempted from this labour. Their  
 “ grain soon sprouts out of the ground.  
 “ When it is about a man’s height, and  
 “ begins to ear, they raise a wooden house in  
 “ the centre of the field, covered with straw,  
 “ in which they set their children to watch  
 “ their corn, and fright away the birds.”

Bosman \* speaks in commendation of  
 the civility, kindness, and great industry of  
 the natives of Whidah; this is confirmed by  
 Smith †, who says, “ The natives here seem to  
 “ be the most gentleman-like Negroes in  
 “ Guinea, abounding with good manners  
 “ and ceremony to each other. The infe-  
 “ rior pay the utmost deference and respect  
 “ to the superior, as do wives to their  
 “ husbands, and children to their parents.  
 “ All here are naturally industrious, and find  
 “ constant employment; the men in agri-  
 “ culture,

---

\* Bosman, page 317.

† Smith, page 195.



“ culture, and the women in spinning and  
 “ weaving cotton. The men, whose chief  
 “ talent lies in husbandry, are unacquainted  
 “ with arms; otherwise, being a numerous  
 “ people, they could have made a better  
 “ defence against the King of Dahome, who  
 “ subdued them without much trouble.”

“ \* Throughout the Gold Coast, there are  
 “ regular markets in all villages, furnished  
 “ with provisions and merchandize, held  
 “ every day in the week, except Tuesday,  
 “ whence they supply not only the inha-  
 “ bitants, but the European ships. The  
 “ *Negro women* are very expert in buying  
 “ and selling, and extremely industrious;  
 “ for they will repair daily to market from  
 “ a considerable distance, loaded like pack-  
 “ horses, with a child, perhaps, at their  
 “ back, and a heavy burden on their heads.  
 “ After selling their wares, they buy fish and  
 “ other necessaries, and return home loaded  
 “ as they came.

“ † There is a market held at Sabi every  
 “ fourth day, also a weekly one in the pro-  
 “ vince of Aplogua, which is so resorted to,  
 “ that there are usually five or six thousand  
 “ merchants. Their markets are so well  
 “ regulated and governed, that seldom any  
 “ disorder happens; each species of mer-  
 “ chandize

---

\* Collect. vol. 2, p. 657. † Collect. vol. 3, p. 11.



“chandize and merchants have a separate  
 “place allotted them by themselves. The  
 “buyers may haggle as much as they will,  
 “but it must be without noise or fraud.  
 “To keep order, the King appoints a judge,  
 “who, with four officers well armed, inspects  
 “the markets, hear all complaints, and, in a  
 “summary way, decides all differences; he  
 “has power to seize, and sell as slaves, all  
 “who are caught in stealing, or disturb-  
 “ing the peace. In these markets are to  
 “be sold men, women, children, oxen,  
 “sheep, goats, and fowls of all kinds; Eu-  
 “ropean cloths, linen and woollen; printed  
 “callicoes, silk, grocery ware, china, gold-  
 “dust, iron in bars, &c. in a word, most sorts  
 “of European goods, as well as the produce  
 “of Africa and Asia. They have other  
 “markets, resembling our fairs, once or  
 “twice a year, to which all the country  
 “repair; for they take care to order the day  
 “so in different governments, as not to inter-  
 “fere with each other.”

With respect to government, William  
 Smith says \*, “That the Gold Coast and  
 “Slave Coast are divided into different dis-  
 “tricts, some of which are governed by  
 “their Chiefs, or Kings; the others, being  
 “more of the nature of a commonwealth,  
 “are

---

\* Smith, page 193.



“ are governed by some of the principal  
 “ men, called Caboceros, who, Bosman says,  
 “ are properly denominated civil fathers,  
 “ whose province is to take care of the wel-  
 “ fare of the city or village, and to appease  
 “ tumults.” But this order of government  
 has been much broken since the coming of  
 the Europeans. Both Bosman and Barbot  
 mention *murther and adultery to be severely*  
*punished on the Coast, frequently by death; and*  
*robbery by a fine proportionable to the goods*  
*stolen.*

The income of some of the Kings is large.  
 Bosman says, “ That the King of Whidah’s  
 “ revenues and duties on things bought and  
 “ sold are considerable; he having the tithe  
 “ of all things sold in the market, or im-  
 “ ported in the country.” \* Both the above-  
 mentioned authors say, *The tax on slaves ship-*  
*ped off in this King’s dominions, in some years,*  
*amounts to near twenty thousand pounds.*

Bosman tells us, “ The Whidah Negroes  
 “ have a faint idea of a true God, ascribing  
 “ to him the attributes of almighty power  
 “ and omnipresence; but God, they say, is  
 “ too high to condescend to think of man-  
 “ kind; wherefore he commits the govern-  
 “ ment of the world to those inferior deities  
 “ which they worship.” Some authors  
 say,

---

\* Bosman, page 337. Barbot, page 335.



say, the wisest of these Negroes are sensible of their mistake in this opinion, but dare not forsake their own religion, for fear of the populace rising and killing them. This is confirmed by William Smith, who says, "That all the natives of this coast believe there is one true God, the author of them and all things; that they have some apprehension of a future state; and that almost every village has a grove, or public place of worship, to which the principal inhabitants, on a set day, resort to make their offerings."

In the Collection \* it is remarked as an excellency in the Guinea government, "That however poor they may be in general, yet there are no beggars to be found amongst them; which is owing to the care of their chief men, whose province it is to take care of the welfare of the city or village; it being part of their office, to see that such people may earn their bread by their labour; some are set to blow the smith's bellows, others to press palm oil, or grind colours for their matts, and sell provision in the markets. The young men are listed to serve as soldiers, so that they suffer no common beggar." Bosman ascribes a further reason for this good order, viz. "That when a Negroe  
F " finds

---

\* Atley's collection, vol. 2, page 619.



“ finds he cannot subsist, he binds himself  
 “ for a certain sum of money, and the  
 “ master to whom he is bound is obliged  
 “ to find him necessaries; that the master  
 “ sets him a sort of task, which is not in the  
 “ least slavish, being chiefly to defend his  
 “ master on occasions; or in sowing time to  
 “ work as much as he himself pleases \*.”

Adjoining to the kingdom of Whidah, are  
 several small governments, as Coto, great and  
 small Popo, Ardrah, &c. all situate on the  
 Slave Coast, where the chief trade for slaves  
 is carried on. These are governed by their  
 respective Kings, and follow much the same  
 customs with those of Whidah, except that  
 their principal living is on plunder, and the  
 slave trade.

C H A P.

---

\* Bosman, page 119.



## C H A P. III.

*THE kingdom of Benin; its extent.*

Esteemed the most potent in Guinea. Fruitfulness of the soil. Good disposition of the people. Order of government. Punishment of crimes. Large extent of the town of Great Benin. Order maintained. The natives honest and charitable. Their religion. The kingdoms of Kongo and Angola. Many of the natives profess christianity. The country fruitful. Disposition of the people. The administration of justice. The town of Leango. Slave trade carried on by the Portugueze. Here the slave trade ends.

**N**EXT adjoining to the Slave Coast, is the kingdom of Benin, which, though it extends but about 170 miles on the sea, yet spreads so far inland, as to be esteemed the most potent kingdom in Guinea. By accounts, the soil and produce appear to be in a great measure like those before described, and the natives are represented as a reasonable good-natured people. Artus says\*, “ They  
 “ are a sincere, inoffensive people, and do  
 F 2 “ no

---

\* Collection, vol. 3, page 228.



“ no injustice either to one another, or to  
 “ strangers.” William Smith \* confirms  
 this account, and says, “ That the inhabi-  
 “ tants are generally very good-natured,  
 “ and exceeding courteous and civil. When  
 “ the Europeans make them presents, which  
 “ in their coming thither to trade they  
 “ always do, they endeavour to return them  
 “ doubly.”

Bosman tells us †, “ That his countrymen  
 “ the Dutch, who were often obliged to  
 “ trust them till they returned the next year,  
 “ were sure to be honestly paid their whole  
 “ debts.”

There is in Benin a considerable order in  
 government. Theft, murder, and adultery,  
 being severely punished. Barbot says ‡, “ If  
 “ a man and a woman of any quality be  
 “ surprized in adultery, they are both put to  
 “ death, and their bodies are thrown on a  
 “ dunghill, and left there a prey to wild  
 “ beasts.” He adds, “ The severity of the  
 “ laws in Benin against adultery ||, amongst  
 “ all

\* Smith, page 228.

† W. Bosman, page 405.

‡ Barbot, page 237.

|| By this account of the punishment inflicted on  
 adulterers in this and other parts of Guinea, it ap-  
 pears the Negroes are not insensible of the sinfulness of  
 such practices. How strange must it then appear to the  
 serious



“ all orders of people, deters them from  
 “ venturing, so that it is but very seldom,  
 “ any persons are punished for that crime.”  
 Smith says, “ Their towns are governed by  
 “ officers appointed by the King, who have  
 “ power to decide in civil cases, and to raise  
 “ the public taxes; but in criminal cases,  
 “ they must send to the King’s court, which  
 “ is held at the town of Oedo, or Great Be-  
 “ nin. This town, which covers a large ex-  
 “ tent of ground, is about sixty miles from  
 “ the

---

serious minded amongst these people, (nay, how incon-  
 sistent is it with every divine and moral law amongst  
 ourselves) that those christian laws which prohibit for-  
 nication and adultery, are in none of the English go-  
 vernments extended to them, but that they are allowed  
 to cohabit and separate at pleasure? And that even their  
 masters think so lightly of their marriage engagements,  
 that, when it suits with their interest, they will separate  
 man from wife, and children from both, to be sold into  
 different, and even distant parts, without regard to their  
 sometimes grievous lamentations; whence it has hap-  
 pened, that such of those people who are truly united in  
 their marriage covenant, and in affection to one another,  
 have been driven to such desperation, as either violently  
 to destroy themselves, or gradually to pine away, and  
 die with mere grief. It is amazing, that whilst the  
 clergy of the established church are publicly expressing  
 a concern, that these oppressed people should be made  
 acquainted with the christian religion, they should be  
 thus suffered, and even forced, so flagrantly to infringe  
 one of the principal injunctions of our holy religion!



“ the sea.” \* Barbot tells us, “ That it con-  
 “ tains thirty streets, twenty fathom wide,  
 “ and almost two miles long, commonly  
 “ extending in a straight line from one gate  
 “ to another; that the gates are guarded  
 “ by soldiers; that in these streets markets  
 “ are held every day, for cattle, ivory, cotton,  
 “ and many sorts of European goods. This  
 “ large town is divided into several wards,  
 “ or districts, each governed by its respec-  
 “ tive King of a street, as they call them,  
 “ to administer justice, and to keep good  
 “ order. The inhabitants are very civil and  
 “ good natured, condescending to what the  
 “ Europeans require of them in a civil  
 “ way.” The same author confirms what  
 has been said by others of their justice in  
 the payment of their debts; and adds,  
 “ That they, above all other Guineans, are  
 “ very honest and just in their dealings; and  
 “ they have such an aversion for theft, that  
 “ by the law of the country it is punished  
 “ with death.” We are told by the same  
 author †, “ That the King of Benin is  
 “ able upon occasion to maintain an army  
 “ of a hundred thousand men; but that,  
 “ for the most part, he does not keep thirty  
 “ thousand.” William Smith says, “ The  
 “ natives

---

\* J. Barbot, page 358, 359. † Barbot, page 369.



“ natives are all free men ; none but fo-  
 “ reigners can be bought and sold there \*.  
 “ They are very charitable, the King as well  
 “ as his subjects.” Bosman confirms this †,  
 and says, “ The King and great Lords subsist  
 “ several poor at their place of residence on  
 “ charity, employing those who are fit for  
 “ any work, and the rest they keep for God’s  
 “ sake ; so that here are no beggars.”

As to religion, these people believe there  
 is a God, the efficient cause of all things ; but,  
 like the rest of the Guineans, they are super-  
 stitiously and idolatrously inclined.

The last division of Guinea from which  
 slaves are imported, are the kingdoms of  
 Kongo and Angola : these lie to the South  
 of Benin, extending with the intermediate  
 land about twelve hundred miles on the coast.  
 Great numbers of the natives of both these  
 kingdoms profess the christian religion, which  
 was long since introduced by the Portugueze,  
 who made early settlements in that country.

In the Collection it is said, that both in  
 Kongo and Angola, the soil is in general  
 fruitful, producing great plenty of grain,  
 Indian corn, and such quantities of rice, that  
 it hardly bears any price, with fruits, roots,  
 and palm oil in plenty.

The

---

\* W. Smith, page 369.

† Bosman, page 409.



The natives are generally a quiet people, who discover a good understanding, and behave in a friendly manner to strangers, being of a mild conversation, affable, and easily overcome with reason.

In the government of Kongo, the King appoints a judge in every particular division, to hear and determine disputes and civil causes; the judges imprison and release, or impose fines, according to the rule of custom; but in weighty matters, every one may appeal to the King, before whom all criminal causes are brought, in which he giveth sentence; but seldom condemneth to death.

The town of Leango stands in the midst of four Lordships, which abound in corn, fruit, &c. Here they make great quantities of cloth of divers kinds, very fine and curious; the inhabitants are seldom idle; they even make needle-work caps as they walk in the streets.

The slave trade is here principally managed by the Portugueze, who carry it far up into the inland countries. They are said to send off from these parts fifteen thousand slaves each year.

At Angola, about the 10th degree of South latitude, ends the trade for slaves.



## C H A P. IV.

THE antientest accounts of the Negroes is from the Nubian Geography, and the writings of Leo the African. Some account of those authors. The Arabians pass into Guinea. The innocency and simplicity of the natives. They are subdued by the Moors. Heli Ischia shakes off the Moorish yoke. The Portugueze make the first descent in Guinea, from whence they carry off some of the natives: More incursions of the like kind. The Portugueze erect the first fort at D'Elmina: They begin the slave trade. Cada Mosto's testimony. Anderson's account to the same purport. De la Caza's concern for the relief of the oppressed Indians. Goes over into Spain to plead their cause. His speech before Charles the Fifth.

THE most antient account we have of the country of the Negroes, particularly that part situate on and between the two great rivers of Senegal and Gambia, is from the writings of two antient authors, one an Arabian, and the other a Moor. The  
 G first



first \* wrote in Arabic, about the twelfth century. His works, printed in that language at Rome, were afterwards translated into Latin, and printed at Paris, under the patronage of the famous Thuanus, chancellor of France, with the title of *Geographica Nubiensis*, containing an account of all the nations lying on the Senegal and Gambia. The other wrote by John Leo †, a Moor, born at Granada, in Spain, before the Moors were totally expelled from that kingdom. He resided in Africa; but being on a voyage from Tripoli to Tunis, was taken by some Italian Corsairs, who finding him possessed of several Arabian books, besides his own manuscripts, apprehended him to be a man of learning, and as such presented him to Pope Leo the Tenth. This Pope encouraging him, he embraced the Romish religion, and his description of Africa was published in Italian. From these writings we gather, that after the Mahometan religion had extended to the kingdom of Morocco, some of the promoters of it crossing the sandy desarts of Numidia, which separate that country from Guinea, found it inhabited by men, who, though under no regular government, and destitute of that knowledge  
the

---

\* See Travels into different parts of Africa, by Francis Moor, with a letter to the publisher.

† Ibid.



the Arabians were favoured with, lived in content and peace. The first author particularly remarks, “ That they never made war, or travelled abroad, but employed themselves in tending their herds, or labouring in the ground.” J. Leo says, page 65. “ That they lived in common, having no property in land, no tyrant nor superior lord, but supported themselves in an equal state, upon the natural produce of the country, which afforded plenty of roots, game, and honey. That ambition or avarice never drove them into foreign countries to subdue or cheat their neighbours. Thus they lived without toil or superfluities.” “ The antient inhabitants of Morocco, who wore coats of mail, and used swords and spears headed with iron, coming amongst these harmless and naked people, soon brought them under subjection, and divided that part of Guinea which lies on the rivers Senegal and Gambia into fifteen parts; those were the fifteen kingdoms of the Negroes, over which the Moors presided, and the common people were Negroes. These Moors taught the Negroes the Mahometan religion, and arts of life; particularly the use of iron, before unknown to them. About the 14th century, a native Negro, called Heli Ischia, expelled the Moorish conquerors; but tho’



“ the Negroes threw off the yoke of a foreign  
“ nation, they only changed a Libyan for a  
“ Negroe master. Heli Ischia himself be-  
“ coming King, led the Negroes on to foreign  
“ wars, and established himself in power over  
“ a very large extent of country.” Since  
Leo’s time, the Europeans have had very little  
knowledge of those parts of Africa, nor do  
they know what became of his great empire.  
It is highly probable that it broke into pieces,  
and that the natives again resumed many of  
their antient customs; for in the account  
published by William Moor, in his travels  
on the river Gambia, we find a mixture of  
the Moorish and Mahometan customs, joined  
with the original simplicity of the Negroes.  
It appears by accounts of antient voyages,  
collected by Hackluit, Purchas, and others,  
that it was about fifty years before the dis-  
covery of America, that the Portugueze at-  
tempted to sail round Cape Bojador, which lies  
between their country and Guinea; this, after  
divers repulses occasioned by the violent  
currents, they effected; when landing on the  
western coasts of Africa, they soon began to  
make incursions into the country, and to seize  
and carry off the native inhabitants. As  
early as the year 1434, Alonzo Gonzales,  
the first who is recorded to have met with  
the natives, being on that coast, pursued  
and



and attacked a number of them, when some were wounded, as was also one of the Portuguese; which the author records as the first blood spilt by christians in those parts. Six years after, the same Gonzales again attacked the natives, and took twelve prisoners, with whom he returned to his vessels; he afterwards put a woman on shore, in order to induce the natives to redeem the prisoners; but the next day 150 of the inhabitants appeared on horses and camels, provoking the Portuguese to land; which they not daring to venture, the natives discharged a volley of stones at them, and went off. After this, the Portuguese still continued to send vessels on the coast of Africa; particularly we read of their falling on a village, whence the inhabitants fled, and, being pursued, twenty-five were taken: “*He that ran best,*” says the author, “*taking the most.* In their way home they killed some of the natives, and took fifty-five more prisoners. \* Afterwards Dinifanes Dagrama, with two other vessels, landed on the island Arguin, where they took fifty-four Moors; then running along the coast eighty leagues farther, they at several times took fifty slaves; but here seven of the Portuguese were killed. Then being joined by several other vessels, Dinifanes proposed to  
“*destroy*”

---

\* Collection, vol. 1, page 13.



“ destroy the island, to revenge the loss of  
 “ the seven Portugueze; of which the Moors  
 “ being apprized, fled, so that no more than  
 “ twelve were found, whereof only four  
 “ could be taken, the rest being killed, as  
 “ also one of the Portugueze.” Many more  
 captures of this kind on the coast of Barbary  
 and Guinea, are recorded to have been made  
 in those early times by the Portugueze; who,  
 in the year 1481, erected their first fort at  
 D’Elmina on that coast, from whence they  
 soon opened a trade for slaves with the inland  
 parts of Guinea.

From the foregoing accounts, it is un-  
 doubted, that the practice of making slaves  
 of the Negroes, owes its origin to the early  
 incursions of the Portugueze on the coast of  
 Africa, solely from an inordinate desire of  
 gain. This is clearly evidenced from their  
 own historians, particularly *Cada Mosto*,  
 about the year 1455, who writes\*, “ That  
 “ before the trade was settled for purchas-  
 “ ing slaves from the Moors at Arguin,  
 “ sometimes four, and sometimes more Por-  
 “ tugueze vessels, were used to come to that  
 “ gulph, well armed; and landing by night,  
 “ would surprize some fishermen’s villages:  
 “ that they even entered into the country,  
 “ and carried off Arabs of both sexes, whom  
 “ they sold in Portugal.” And also, “ That  
 “ the

---

\* Collection vol, 1, page 576.



“ the Portugueze and Spaniards, settled on  
 “ four of the Canary islands, would go to  
 “ the other island by night, and seize some  
 “ of the natives of both sexes, whom they  
 “ sent to be sold in Spain.”

After the settlement of America, those devastations, and the captivating the miserable Africans, greatly increased.

Anderfon, in his history of trade and commerce, at page 336, speaking of what passed in the year 1508, writes, “ That the Spaniards had by this time found that the miserable Indian natives, whom they had made to work in their mines and fields, were not so robust and proper for those purposes as Negroes brought from Africa; wherefore they, about that time, began to import Negroes for that end into Hispaniola, from the Portugueze settlements on the Guinea coasts; and also afterwards for their sugar works.” This oppression of the Indians had, even before this time, roused the zeal, as well as it did the compassion, of some of the truly pious of that day; particularly that of Bartholomew De las Casas, bishop of Chapia; whom a desire of being instrumental towards the conversion of the Indians, had invited into America. It is generally agreed by the writers of that age, that he was a man of perfect disinterestedness, and ardent charity; being affected with this  
 sad



sad spectacle, he returned to the court of Spain, and there made a true report of the matter; but not without being strongly opposed by those mercenary wretches, who had enslaved the Indians; yet being strong and indefatigable, he went to and fro between Europe and America, firmly determined not to give over his pursuit but with his life. After long sollicitation, and innumerable repulses, he obtained leave to lay the matter before the Emperor Charles the Fifth, then King of Spain. As the contents of the speech he made before the King in council, are very applicable to the case of the enslaved Africans, and a lively evidence that the spirit of true piety speaks the same language in the hearts of faithful men in all ages, for the relief of their fellow creatures from oppression of every kind, I think it may not be improper here to transcribe the most interesting parts of it. “ I was,” says this pious bishop, “ one of the first who  
 “ went to America; neither curiosity nor  
 “ interest prompted me to undertake so  
 “ long and dangerous a voyage; the saving  
 “ the souls of the heathen was my sole object. Why was I not permitted, even at  
 “ the expence of my blood, to ransom so  
 “ many thousand souls, who fell unhappy  
 “ victims to avarice or lust? I have been  
 “ an eye witness to such cruel treatment of  
 “ the



“ the Indians, as is too horrid to be menti-  
 “ oned at this time.—It is said that bar-  
 “ barous executions were necessary to pu-  
 “ nish or check the rebellion of the Ameri-  
 “ cans;—but to whom was this owing?  
 “ Did not those people receive the Spaniards,  
 “ who first came amongst them, with gentle-  
 “ nefs and humanity? Did they not shew  
 “ more joy, in proportion, in lavishing  
 “ treasure upon them, than the Spaniards  
 “ did greediness in receiving it?—But our  
 “ avarice was not yet satisfied;—tho’ they  
 “ gave up to us their land and their riches,  
 “ we would tear from them their wives, their  
 “ children and their liberties.—To black-  
 “ en these unhappy people, their enemies  
 “ assert, that they are scarce human crea-  
 “ tures?—but it is we that ought to blush,  
 “ for having been less men, and more bar-  
 “ barous, than they.—What right have  
 “ we to enslave a people who are born free,  
 “ and whom we disturbed, tho’ they never  
 “ offended us?—They are represented as  
 “ a stupid people, addicted to vice?—but  
 “ have they not contracted most of their  
 “ vices from the example of the christians?  
 “ And as to those vices peculiar to them-  
 “ selves, have not the christians quickly ex-  
 “ ceeded them therein? Nevertheless it  
 “ must be granted, that the Indians still re-  
 “ main untainted with many vices usual a-

H

“ amongst



“ mongst the Europeans; such as ambition,  
 “ blasphemy treachery, and many like  
 “ monsters, which have not yet took place  
 “ with them; they have scarce an idea of  
 “ them; so that in effect, all the advantage  
 “ we can claim, is to have more elevated  
 “ notions of things, and our natural facul-  
 “ ties more unfolded and more cultivated  
 “ than theirs.—Do not let us flatter our  
 “ corruptions, nor voluntarily blind our-  
 “ selves; *all* nations are equally *free*; one  
 “ nation has no right to infringe upon the  
 “ freedom of any other; let us do towards  
 “ these people as we would have them to  
 “ have done towards us, if they had land-  
 “ ed upon our shore, with the same superi-  
 “ ority of strength. And indeed, why  
 “ should not things be equal on both sides?  
 “ How long has the right of the strongest  
 “ been allowed to be the balance of justice?  
 “ What part of the gospel gives a sanction  
 “ to such a doctrine? In what part of the  
 “ whole earth did the apostles and the first  
 “ promulgators of the gospel ever claim a  
 “ right over the lives, the freedom, or the sub-  
 “ stance of the Gentiles? What a strange me-  
 “ thod this is of propagating the gospel, that  
 “ holy law of grace, which, from being slaves  
 “ to Satan, initiates us into the freedom of  
 “ the children of God!—Will it be possi-  
 “ ble for us to inspire them with a love to  
 “ its



“ its dictates, while they are so exasperat-  
 “ ed at being dispossessed of that invaluable  
 “ blessing, *Liberty*? The apostles submitted  
 “ to chains themselves, but loaded no man  
 “ with them. Christ came to free, not to  
 “ enslave us.——Submission to the faith  
 “ he left us, ought to be a voluntary act,  
 “ and should be propagated by persuasion,  
 “ gentleness, and reason.”

“ At my first arrival in Hispaniola, (add-  
 “ ed the bishop) it contained a million of  
 “ inhabitants; and now (viz. in the space  
 “ of about twenty years) there remains scarce  
 “ the hundredth part of them; thousands  
 “ have perished thro’ want, fatigue, merci-  
 “ less punishment, cruelty, and barbarity.  
 “ If the blood of *one* man unjustly shed,  
 “ calls loudly for vengeance; how strong  
 “ must be the cry of that of so *many* unhap-  
 “ py creatures which is shedding daily?”—

The good bishop concluded his speech, with  
 imploring the King’s clemency for subjects  
 so unjustly oppressed; and bravely declared,  
 that heaven would one day call him to an  
 account, for the numberless acts of cruelty  
 which he might have prevented. The King  
 applauded the bishop’s zeal; promised to  
 second it; but so many of the great ones  
 had an interest in continuing the oppression,  
 that nothing was done; so that all the In-  
 dians in Hispaniola, except a few who



had hid themselves in the most inaccessible mountains, were destroyed.

---

## C H A P. V.

**FIRST** account of the English trading to Guinea. Thomas Windham and several others go to that coast. Some of the Negroes carried off by the English. Queen Elizabeth's charge to Captain Hawkins respecting the natives: Nevertheless he goes on the coast and carries off some of the Negroes. Patents are granted. The King of France objects to the Negroes being kept in slavery: As do the college of Cardinals at Rome. The natives, an inoffensive people; corrupted by the Europeans. The sentiments of the natives concerning the slave-trade, from William Smith: Confirmed by Andrew Brue and James Barbot.

**I**T was about the year 1551, towards the latter end of the reign of King Edward the Sixth, when some London merchants sent out the first English ship, on a trading voyage to the coast of Guinea; this was soon followed by several others to the same parts; but



but the English not having then any plantations in the West Indies, and consequently no occasion for Negroes, such ships traded only for gold, elephants teeth, and Guinea pepper. This trade was carried on at the hazard of losing their ships and cargoes, if they had fallen into the hands of the Portuguese, who claimed an exclusive right of trade, on account of the several settlements they had made there.\* In the year 1553, we find captain Thomas Windham trading along the coast with 140 men, in three ships, and sailing as far as Benin, which lies about 3000 miles down the coast, to take in a load of pepper.† Next year John Lock traded along the coast of Guinea, as far as D'Elmina, when he brought away considerable quantities of gold and ivory. He speaks well of the natives, and says,‡ *“That whoever will deal with them must behave civilly, for they will not traffic if ill used.”* In 1555, William Towerfon traded in a peaceable manner with the natives, who made complaint to him of the Portuguese, who were then settled in their castle at D'Elmina, saying, *“They were bad men, who made them slaves if they could take them, putting irons on their legs.”*

This

---

\* Astley's collection, vol. 1. page 139.

† Collection vol. 1. p. 148.

‡ Ibid. 257.



This bad example of the Portuguese was soon followed by some evil disposed Englishmen; for the same captain Towerfon relates,  
 “ \* That in the course of his voyage, he  
 “ perceived the natives, near D’Elmina, un-  
 “ willing to come to him, and that he was  
 “ at last attacked by them; which he un-  
 “ derstood was done in revenge for the  
 “ wrong done them the year before, by  
 “ one captain Gainsh, who had taken away  
 “ the Negro captain’s son, and three others,  
 “ with their gold, &c. This caused them to  
 “ join the Portuguese, notwithstanding  
 “ their hatred of them, against the Eng-  
 “ lish.” The next year captain Towerfon brought these men back again; whereupon the Negroes shewed him much kindness. †  
 Quickly after this, another instance of the same kind occurred, in the case of captain George Fenner, who being on the coast, with three vessels, was also attacked by the Negroes, who wounded several of his people, and violently carried three of his men to their town. The captain sent a messenger, offering any thing they desired for the ransom of his men: but they refused to deliver them, letting him know, “ That  
 “ three weeks before, an English ship, which  
 “ came

---

\* Collection, vol. 1. p. 148.

† Ibid. 157.



“ came in the road, had carried of three of  
 “ their people; and that till they were brought  
 “ again, they would not restore his men, even tho’  
 “ they should give their three ships to release  
 “ them.” It was probably the evil conduct  
 of these, and some other Englishmen, which  
 was the occasion of what is mentioned in  
 Hill’s naval history, viz. “ That when cap-  
 “ tain Hawkins returned from his first voy-  
 “ age to Africa, Queen Elizabeth sent for  
 “ him, when she expressed her concern,  
 “ lest any of the African Negroes should  
 “ be carried off without their free consent;  
 “ which she declared would be detestable,  
 “ and would call down the vengeance of  
 “ heaven upon the undertakers.” Hawkins  
 made great promises, which nevertheless he  
 did not perform; for his next voyage to the  
 coast appears to have been principally cal-  
 culated to procure Negro slaves, in order  
 to sell them to the Spaniards in the West In-  
 dies; which occasioned the same author to  
 use these remarkable words: “ *Here began*  
 “ *the horrid practice of forcing the Africans in-*  
 “ *to slavery: an injustice and barbarity, which,*  
 “ *so sure as there is vengeance in heaven for*  
 “ *the worst of crimes, will some time be the de-*  
 “ *struction of all who act or who encourage it.*”  
 This captain Hawkins, afterwards sir John  
 Hawkins, seems to have been the first Eng-  
 lishman who gave public countenance to this  
 wicked



wicked traffic: For Anderson, before mentioned, at page 401, says, “ That in the  
 “ year 1562, captain Hawkins, assisted by  
 “ subscription of fundry gentlemen, now  
 “ fitted out three ships; and having learnt  
 “ that Negroes were a very good commodi-  
 “ ty in Hispaniola, he sailed to the coast of  
 “ Guinea, took in Negroes, and sailed with  
 “ them for Hispaniola, where he sold them,  
 “ and his English commodities, and loaded  
 “ his three vessels with hides, sugar and  
 “ ginger, &c. with which he returned  
 “ home anno 1563, making a prosperous  
 “ voyage.” As it proved a lucrative busi-  
 ness, the trade was continued both by  
 Hawkins and others, as appears from the na-  
 val chronicle, page 55, where it is said,  
 “ That on the 18th of October, 1564, cap-  
 “ tain John Hawkins, with two ships of 700  
 “ and 140 tuns, sailed for Africa; that on  
 “ the 8th of December they anchored to the  
 “ South of Cape Verd, where the captain  
 “ manned the boat, and sent eighty men in  
 “ armour into the country, to see if they  
 “ could take some Negroes; but the natives  
 “ flying from them, they returned to their  
 “ ships, and proceeded farther down the  
 “ coast. Here they staid certain days, send-  
 “ ing their men ashore, in order) as the au-  
 “ thor says) to burn and spoil their towns  
 “ and take the inhabitants. The land they  
 “ observed



“ observed to be well cultivated, there be-  
 “ ing plenty of grain, and fruit of several  
 “ forts, and the towns prettily laid out. On  
 “ the 25th, being informed by the Portu-  
 “ gueze of a town of Negroes called Bymba,  
 “ where there was not only a quantity of  
 “ gold, but an hundred and forty inhabitants,  
 “ they resolved to attack it, having the Por-  
 “ tugueze for their guide; but by misma-  
 “ nagement they took but ten Negroes, hav-  
 “ ing seven of their own men killed, and  
 “ twenty-seven wounded. They then went  
 “ farther down the coast; when, having pro-  
 “ cured a number of Negroes, they proceeded  
 “ to the West Indies, where they sold them to  
 “ the Spaniards.” And in the same naval  
 chronicle, at page 76, it is said, “ That in the  
 “ year 1567, Francis Drake, before perform-  
 “ ing his voyage round the world, went with  
 “ Sir John Hawkins in his expedition to the  
 “ coast of Guinea, where taking in a cargo  
 “ of slaves, they determined to steer for the  
 “ Caribbee islands.” How Queen Elizabeth  
 suffered so grievous an infringement of the  
 rights of mankind to be perpetrated by her  
 subjects, and how she was persuaded, about  
 the 30th year of her reign, to grant patents  
 for carrying on a trade from the North part  
 of the river Senegal, to an hundred leagues  
 beyond Sierra Leona, which gave rise to the  
 present African company, is hard to account  
 I for;



for, any otherwise than that it arose from the misrepresentation made to her of the situation of the Negroes, and of the advantages it was pretended they would reap from being made acquainted with the christian religion. This was the case of Lewis the XIIIth, King of France, who, Labat, in his account of the isles of America, tells us, “ Was extremely uneasy at a law by which  
 “ the Negroes of his colonies were to be  
 “ made slaves; but it being strongly urged  
 “ to him as the readiest means for their  
 “ conversion to christianity, he acquiesced  
 “ therewith.” Nevertheless, some of the christian powers did not so easily give way in this matter; for we find \*, “ That cardinal  
 “ Cibo, one of the Pope’s principal ministers of state, wrote a letter on behalf  
 “ of the college of cardinals, or great council  
 “ at Rome, to the missionaries in Congo,  
 “ complaining that the pernicious and abominable  
 “ abuse of selling slaves was yet continued,  
 “ requiring them to remedy the same, if possible;  
 “ but this the missionaries saw little hopes of accomplishing, by reason  
 “ that the trade of the country lay wholly in  
 “ slaves and ivory.”

From the foregoing accounts, as well as other authentic publications of this kind, it appears that it was the unwarrantable lust of  
 gain,

---

\* Collection, vol. 3, page 164.



gain, which first stimulated the Portugueze, and afterwards other Europeans, to engage in this horrid traffic. By the most authentic relations of those early times, the natives were an inoffensive people, who, when civilly used, traded amicably with the Europeans. It is recorded of those of Benin, the largest kingdom in Guinea\*, *That they were a gentle, loving people;* and Reynold says †, “*They found more sincere proofs of love and good will from the natives, than they could find from the Spaniards and Portugueze, even tho’ they had relieved them from the greatest misery.*” And from the same relations there is no reason to think otherwise, but that they generally lived in peace amongst themselves; for I don’t find, in the numerous publications I have perused on this subject, relating to these early times, of there being wars on that coast, nor of any sale of captives taken in battle, who would have been otherwise sacrificed by the victors ‡: Not-

I 2                   withstanding

---

\* Collection, vol. 1, page 202.

† Idem, page 245.

‡ Note, This plea falls of itself, for if the Negroes apprehended they should be cruelly put to death, if they were not sent away, why do they manifest such reluctance and dread as they generally do, at being brought from their native country? William Smith, at page 28, says, “*The Gambians abhor slavery, and will attempt any thing, tho’ never so desperate, to avoid it,*” and  
Thomas



withstanding some modern authors, in their publications relating to the West Indies, desirous of throwing a veil over the iniquity of the slave trade, have been hardy enough, upon meer supposition or report, to assert the contrary.

It was long after the Portugueze had made a practice of violently forcing the natives of Africa into slavery, that we read of the different Negroe nations making war upon each other, and selling their captives. And probably this was not the case, till those bordering on the coast, who had been used to supply the vessels with necessaries, had become corrupted by their intercourse with the Europeans, and were excited by drunkenness and avarice to join them in carrying on those wicked schemes, by which those unnatural wars were perpetrated; the inhabitants kept in continual alarms; the country laid waste; and, as William Moor expresses it, *Infinite numbers sold into slavery.* But that the Europeans are the principal cause of these devastations, is particularly evidenced by one, whose connexion with the trade would

---

Thomas Philips, in his account of a voyage he performed to the coast of Guinea, writes, “*They, the Negroes, are so loth to leave their own country, that they have often leaped out of the canoe, boat, or ship, into the sea, and kept under water till they were drowned, to avoid being taken up.*”



would rather induce him to represent it in the fairest colours, to wit, William Smith, the person sent in the year 1726 by the African company to survey their settlements, who, from the information he received of one of the factors, who had resided ten years in that country, says \*, “ *That the discerning natives account it their greatest unhappiness, that they were ever visited by the Europeans.*” — “ *That we christians introduced the traffick of slaves; and that before our coming they lived in peace.*”

In the accounts relating to the African trade, we find this melancholy truth farther asserted by some of the principal directors in the different factories; particularly A. Brue says †, “ *That the Europeans were far from desiring to act as peace-makers amongst the Negroes; which would be acting contrary to their interest, since the greater the wars, the more slaves were procured,*” And William Bosman also remarks ‡, “ *That one of the former commanders gave large sums of money to the Negroes of one nation, to induce them to attack some of the neighbouring nations, which occasioned a battle which was more bloody than the wars of the Negroes usually*”

---

\* William Smith, page 266.

† Collection, vol. 2, page 98.

‡ Bosman, page 31.



“ ally are.” This is confirmed by J. Barbot, who says, “ That the country of D’Elmina, “ which was formerly very powerful and popu- “ lous, was in his time so much drained of its “ inhabitants by the intestine wars fomented “ amongst the Negroes by the Dutch, that there “ did not remain inhabitants enough to till the “ country.”

C H A P.



## C H A P. VI.

THE conduct of the Europeans and Africans compared. Slavery more tolerable amongst the antients than in our colonies. As christianity prevailed amongst the barbarous nations, the inconsistency of slavery became more apparent. The charters of manumission, granted in the early times of christianity, founded on an apprehension of duty to God. The antient Britons, and other European nations, in their original state, no less barbarous than the Negroes. Slaves in Guinea used with much greater lenity than the Negroes are in the colonies.—Note. How the slaves are treated in Algiers, as also in Turkey.

SUCH is the woeful corruption of human nature, that every practice which flatters our pride and covetousness, will find its advocates! This is manifestly the case in the matter before us; the savageness of the Negroes in some of their customs, and particularly their deviating so far from the feelings of humanity, as to join in captivating  
and



and selling each other, gives their interested oppressors a pretence for representing them as unworthy of liberty, and the natural rights of mankind. But these sophisters turn the argument full upon themselves, when they instigate the poor creatures to such shocking impiety, by every means that fantastic subtilty can suggest; thereby shewing in their own conduct, a more glaring proof of the same depravity, and, if there was any reason in the argument, a greater unfitness for the same precious enjoyment: for though some of the ignorant Africans may be thus corrupted by their intercourse with the baser of the European natives, and the use of strong liquors, this is no excuse for high-professing christians; bred in a civilized country, with so many advantages unknown to the Africans, and pretending to a superior degree of gospel light. Nor can it justify them in raising up fortunes to themselves from the misery of others, and calmly projecting voyages for the seizure of men naturally as free as themselves; and who, they know, are no otherwise to be procured than by such barbarous means, as none but those hardened wretches, who are lost to every sense of christian compassion, can make use of. Let us diligently compare, and impartially weigh, the situation of those ignorant Negroes, and these enlightened christians;



christians; then lift up the scale and say, which of the two are the greater savages.

Slavery has been of a long time in practice in many parts of Asia; it was also in usage among the Romans when that empire flourished; but, except in some particular instances, it was rather a reasonable servitude, no ways comparable to the unreasonable and unnatural service extorted from the Negroes in our colonies. A late learned author,\* speaking of those times which succeeded the dissolution of that empire, acquaints us, that as christianity prevailed, it very much removed those wrong prejudices and practices, which had taken root in darker times: after the irruption of the Northern nations, and the introduction of the feudal or military government, whereby the most extensive power was lodged in a few members of society, to the depression of the rest, the common people were little better than slaves, and many were indeed such; but as christianity gained ground, the gentle spirit of that religion, together with the doctrines it teaches, concerning the original equality of mankind, as well as the impartial eye with which the Almighty regards men of every condition, and admits them to a participation of his benefits; so far mani-

K

fested

---

\* See Robertson's history of Charles the 5th.



fested the inconsistency of slavery with christianity, that to set their fellow christians at liberty was deemed an act of piety, highly meritorious and acceptable to God. \*

Accordingly

\* In the years 1315 and 1318, Louis X. and his brother Philip, Kings of France, issued ordonnances, declaring, " That as all men were by nature free-  
 " born, and as their kingdom was called the kingdom  
 " of Franks, they determined that it should be so in  
 " reality, as well as in name; therefore they appoint-  
 " ed that enfranchisements should be granted through-  
 " out the whole kingdom, upon just and reasonable  
 " conditions." " These edicts were carried into imme-  
 " diate execution within the royal domain." —————

" In England, as the spirit of liberty gained ground, the  
 " very name and idea of personal servitude, without  
 " any formal interposition of the legislature to prohibit  
 " it, was totally banished."

" The effects of such a remarkable change in the  
 " condition of so great a part of the people, could not  
 " fail of being considerable and extensive. The hus-  
 " bandman, master of his own industry, and secure of  
 " reaping for himself the fruits of his labour, became  
 " farmer of the same field where he had formerly  
 " been compelled to toil for the benefit of another. The  
 " odious name of master and of slave, the most mortif-  
 " ying and depressing of all distinctions to human  
 " nature, were abolished. New prospects opened,  
 " and new incitements to ingenuity and enterprise  
 " presented themselves, to those who were emancipat-  
 " ed. The expectation of bettering their fortune, as  
 " well as that of raising themselves to a more honour-  
 " able condition, concurred in calling forth their  
 " activity and genius; and a numerous class of men,  
 " who



Accordingly a great part of the charters granted for the manumission or freedom of slaves about that time, are granted *pro amore Dei, for the love of God, pro mercede animæ, to obtain mercy to the soul.* Manumission was frequently granted on death-beds, or by latter wills. As the minds of men are at that time awakened to sentiments of humanity and piety, these deeds proceeded from religious motives. The same author remarks, That there are several forms of those manumissions still extant, all of them founded *on religious considerations, and in order to procure the favour of God.* Since that time, the practice of keeping men in slavery gradually ceased amongst christians, till it was renewed in the case before us. And as the prevalency of the spirit of christianity caused men to emerge from the darkness they then lay under, in this respect; so it is much to be feared that so great a deviation therefrom, by the encouragement given to the slavery of the Negroes in our colonies, if continued, will, by degrees, reduce those countries which support and encourage it but more immediately

K 2

diately

---

“ who formerly had no political existence, and were  
 “ employed merely as instruments of labour, became  
 “ useful citizens, and contributed towards augmenting  
 “ the force or riches of the society, which adopted  
 “ them as members.” William Robertson’s history  
 of Charles the 5th, vol. 1. p. 35.



diately those parts of America which are in the practice of it, to the ignorance and barbarity of the darkest ages.

If instead of making slaves of the Negroes, the nations who assume the name and character of christians, would use their endeavours to make the nations of Africa acquainted with the nature of the christian religion, to give them a better sense of the true use of the blessings or life, the more beneficial arts and customs would, by degrees, be introduced amongst them; this care probably would produce the same effect upon them, which it has had on the inhabitants of Europe, formerly as savage and barbarous as the natives of Africa. Those cruel wars amongst the blacks would be likely to cease, and a fair and honorable commerce, in time, take place throughout that vast country. It was by these means that the inhabitants of Europe, though formerly a barbarous people, became civilized. Indeed the account Julius Cæsar gives of the ancient Britons in their state of ignorance, is not such as should make us proud of ourselves, or lead us to despise the unpolished nations of the earth; for he informs us, “ That they lived in many respects like our Indians, being clad with skins, painting their bodies, &c.” He also adds, “ That they, brother with brother,  
“ and



“and parents with children, had wives in  
 “common.” A greater barbarity than any  
 heard of amongst the Negroes. Nor doth  
 Tacitus give a more honourable account of  
 the Germans, from whom the Saxons, our  
 immediate ancestors, sprung. The Danes,  
 who succeeded them (who may also be num-  
 bered among our progenitors) were full as  
 bad, if not worse.

It is usual for people to advance as a pal-  
 liation in favour of keeping the Negroes in  
 bondage, that there are slaves in Guinea, and  
 that those amongst us might be so in their  
 own country; but let such consider the in-  
 consistency of our giving any countenance  
 to slavery, because the Africans, whom we  
 esteem a barbarous and savage people, allow  
 of it, and perhaps the more from our example.  
 Had the professors of christianity acted in-  
 deed as such, they might have been instru-  
 mental to convince the Negroes of their er-  
 ror in this respect; but even this, when  
 inquired into, will be to us an occasion of  
 blushing, if we are not hardened to every  
 sense of shame, rather than a *palliation*  
 of our iniquitous conduct; as it will appear  
 that the slavery endured in Guinea, and  
 other parts of Africa, and in Asia, \* is by  
 no

---

\* In the history of the piratical states of Barbary,  
 printed in 1750, *said to be* wrote by a person who re-  
 sided



no means so grievous as that in our colonies. William Moor, speaking of the natives living

---

sided at Algiers, in a public character, at page 265 the author says, “ The world exclaims against the Algerines for their cruel treatment of their slaves, and “ their employing even tortures to convert them to “ mahometism: but this is a vulgar error, artfully “ propagated for selfish views. So far are their slaves “ from being ill used, that they must have committed “ some very great fault to suffer any punishment. “ Neither are they forced to work beyond their “ strength, but rather spared, lest they should fall sick. “ Some are so pleased with their situation, that they “ will not purchase their ransom, though they are “ able.” It is the same generally through the Mahometan countries, except in some particular instances, as that of Muley Ishmael, late Emperor of Morocco, who being naturally barbarous, frequently used both his subjects and slaves with cruelty. Yet even under him the usage the slaves met with was, in general, much more tolerable than that of the Negroe slaves in the West Indies. Captain Braithwaite, an author of credit, who accompanied consul general Russel in a congratulatory embassy to Muley Ishmael’s successor, upon his accession to the throne, says, “ The “ the situation of the christian slaves in Morocco “ was not near so bad as represented.—That it was “ true they were kept at labour by the late Emperor, “ but not harder than our daily labourers go through. “ —Masters of ships were never obliged to work, nor “ such as had but a small matter of money to give “ the Alcaide.—When sick, they had a religious house “ appointed for them to go to, where they were well “ attended: and whatever money in charity was “ sent



living on the river Gambia, \* says, " That  
 " some of the Negroes have many house  
 " slaves, which are their greatest glory ;  
 " that those slaves live so well and easy,  
 " that it is sometimes a hard matter to  
 " know the slaves from their masters or  
 " mistresses. And that though in some  
 " parts of Africa they sell their slaves born  
 " in the family, yet on the river Gambia  
 " they think it a very wicked thing."  
 The author adds, " He never heard of but  
 " one that ever sold a family slave, except  
 " for such crimes as they would have been  
 " sold for if they had been free." And in  
 Astley's collection, speaking of the customs of  
 the Negroes in that large extent of country  
 further

---

" sent them by their friends in Europe, was their  
 " own." Braithwaite's revolutions of Morocco.

Lady Montague, wife of the English ambassador at  
 Constantinople, in her letters, vol. 3. page 20, writes,  
 " I know you expect I should say something particular  
 " of the slaves ; and you will imagine me half a  
 " Turk, when I do not speak of it with the same hor-  
 " ror other christians have done before me ; but I  
 " cannot forbear applauding the humanity of the  
 " Turks to these creatures ; they are not ill used ; and  
 " their slavery, in my opinion, is no worse than servi-  
 " tude all over the world. It is true they have no  
 " wages, but they give them yearly cloaths to a high-  
 " er value than our salaries, to our ordinary ser-  
 " vants."

\* W. Moor, p. 30.



further down the coast, particularly denominated the coast of Guinea, it is said, \* “ They  
 “ have not many slaves on the coast; none  
 “ but the King or nobles are permitted to  
 “ buy or sell any; so that they are allowed  
 “ only what are necessary for their families,  
 “ or tilling the ground.” The same author  
 adds, “ *That they generally use their slaves well,*  
 “ *and seldom correct them.*”

---

## C H A P. VII.

**MONTESQUIEU**'s sentiments on slavery. Moderation enjoined by the Mosaic law in the punishment of offenders. Morgan Godwyn's account of the contempt and grievous rigour exercised upon the Negroes in his time. Account from Jamaica, relating to the inhuman treatment of them there. Bad effects attendant on slave-keeping, as well to the masters as the slaves. Extracts from several laws relating to Negroes. Richard Baxter's sentiments on slave-keeping.

**T**HAT celebrated civilian Montesquieu, in his treatise *on the spirit of laws*, on the article of slavery says, “ *It is neither*  
 “ *useful*”

---

\* Collection vol. 2. p. 647.



“ useful to the master nor slave; to the slave,  
 “ because he can do nothing through principle  
 “ (or virtue); to the master, because he con-  
 “ tracts with his slave all sorts of bad habits,  
 “ insensibly accustoms himself to want all  
 “ moral virtues; becomes haughty, hasty, hard-  
 “ hearted, passionate, voluptuous, and cruel.”

The lamentable truth of this assertion was quickly verified in the English plantations. When the practice of slave-keeping was introduced, it soon produced its natural effects; it reconciled men, of otherwise good dispositions, to the most hard and cruel measures. It quickly proved, what, under the law of Moses, was apprehended would be the consequence of unmerciful chastisements. Deut. xxv. 2. “ And it shall be if  
 “ the wicked man be worthy to be beaten, that  
 “ the judge shall cause him to lie down, and to  
 “ be beaten before his face, according to his  
 “ fault, by a certain number; forty stripes he  
 “ may give him, and not exceed.” And the reason rendered, is out of respect to human nature, viz. “ Lest if he should exceed, and  
 “ beat him above these with many stripes, then  
 “ thy brother should seem vile unto thee.” As this effect soon followed the cause, the cruelest measures were adopted, in order to make the most of the poor wretches labour; and in the minds of the masters such an idea was excited of inferiority, in the nature of these  
 L their



their unhappy fellow creatures, that they soon esteemed and treated them as beasts of burden: pretending to doubt, and some of them even presuming to deny, that the efficacy of the death of Christ extended to them. Which is particularly noted in a book, intituled *The Negroes and Indians advocate*, dedicated to the then Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote so long since as in the year 1680, by Morgan Godwyn, thought to be a clergyman of the church of England.

\* *The same* spirit of sympathy and zeal which stirred

---

\* There is a principle which is pure, placed in the human mind, which in different places or ages hath had different names; it is, however, pure, and proceeds from God.—It is deep and inward, confined to no forms of religion, nor excluded from any, where the heart stands in perfect sincerity. In whomsoever this takes root and grows, of what nation soever, they become brethren in the best sense of the expression. Using ourselves to take ways which appear most easy to us, when inconsistent with that purity which is without beginning, we thereby set up a government of our own, and deny obedience to Him whose service is true liberty. He that has a servant, made so wrongfully, and knows it to be so, when he treats him otherwise than a free man, when he reaps the benefit of his labour, without paying him such wages as are reasonably due to free men for the like service; these things, though done in calmness, without any shew of disorder, do yet deprave the mind, in like manner, and with as great certainty, as prevailing cold congeals water. These steps taken by masters, and their conduct striking the minds of their children, whilst young, leave less room for that which is good to work upon them.

The



stirred up the good Bishop of Chapia to  
 plead with so much energy the kindred cause  
 L 2 of

---

The customs of their parents, their neighbours, and the people with whom they converse, working upon their minds, and they from thence conceiving wrong ideas of things, and modes of conduct, the entrance into their hearts becomes in a great measure shut up, against the gentle movings of uncreated purity.

From one age to another the gloom grows thicker and darker, till error gets established by general opinion; but whoever attends to perfect goodness, and remains under the melting influence of it, finds a path unknown to many, and sees the necessity to lean upon the arm of divine strength, and dwell alone, or with a few in the right, committing their cause to him who is a refuge to his people. Negroes are our fellow creatures, and their present condition among us requires our serious consideration. We know not the time, when those scales, in which mountains are weighed, may turn. The parent of mankind is gracious, his care is over his smallest creatures, and a multitude of men escape not his notice; and though many of them are trodden down and despised, yet he remembers them. He seeth their affliction, and looketh upon the spreading increasing exaltation of the oppressor. He turns the channel of power, humbles the most haughty people, and gives deliverance to the oppressed, at such periods as are consistent with his infinite justice and goodness. And wherever gain is preferred to equity, and wrong things publickly encouraged, to that degree that wickedness takes root and spreads wide amongst the inhabitants of a country, there is a real cause for sorrow, to all such whose love to mankind stands on a true principle, and wisely consider the end and event of things." Consideration on keeping Negroes, by John Woolman, part 2. p. 50.



of the Indians of America, an hundred and fifty years before, was equally operating about a century past on the minds of some of the well disposed of that day; amongst others this worthy clergyman, having been an eye witness of the oppression and cruelty exercised upon the Negro and Indian slaves, endeavoured to raise the attention of those, in whose power it might be to procure them relief; amongst other matters, in his address to the Archbishop, he remarks in substance,

“ That the people of the island of Barbadoes  
 “ were not content with exercising the  
 “ greatest hardness and barbarity upon the  
 “ Negroes, in making the most of their  
 “ labour, without any regard to the calls of  
 “ humanity, but that they had suffered such  
 “ a slight and undervaluement to prevail in  
 “ their minds towards these their oppressed  
 “ fellow creatures, as to discourage any step  
 “ being taken, whereby they might be made  
 “ acquainted with the christian religion.  
 “ That their conduct towards their slaves  
 “ was such as gave him reason to believe,  
 “ that either they had suffered a spirit of  
 “ infidelity, a spirit quite contrary to the  
 “ nature of the gospel, to prevail in them,  
 “ or that it must be their established opinion  
 “ that the Negroes had no more souls than  
 “ beasts; that hence they concluded them  
 “ to be neither susceptible of religious im-  
 “ pressions,



“ preffions, nor fit objects for the redeeming  
 “ grace of God to operate upon. That  
 “ under this persuasion, and from a disposi-  
 “ tion of cruelty, they treated them  
 “ with far less humanity than they did  
 “ their cattle; for, says he, they do not  
 “ starve their horses, which they expect  
 “ should both carry and credit them on the  
 “ road; nor pinch the cow, by whose milk  
 “ they are sustained; which yet, to their  
 “ eternal shame, is too frequently the lot and  
 “ condition of those poor people, from whose  
 “ labour their wealth and livelihood doth  
 “ wholly arise; not only in their diet, but in  
 “ their cloathing, and overworking some of  
 “ them even to death (which is particularly  
 “ the calamity of the most innocent and la-  
 “ borious) but also in tormenting and whip-  
 “ ping them almost, and sometimes quite, to  
 “ death, upon even small miscarriages. He  
 “ apprehends it was from this prejudice  
 “ against the Negroes, that arose those super-  
 “ cilious checks and frowns he frequently  
 “ met with, when using innocent argu-  
 “ ments and persuasions, in the way of his  
 “ duty as a minister of the gospel, to labour  
 “ for the convincement and conversion of  
 “ the Negroes; being repeatedly told, with  
 “ spiteful scoffings, (even by some esteem-  
 “ ed religious) that the Negroes were no  
 “ more susceptible of receiving benefit, by  
 “ becoming



“ becoming members of the church, than  
 “ their dogs and bitches. The usual answer  
 “ he received, when exhorting their masters  
 “ to do their duty in that respect, being,  
 “ *What! these black dogs be made christians!*  
 “ *what! they be made like us! with abundance*  
 “ *more of the same.* Nevertheless, he re-  
 “ marks that the Negroes were capable,  
 “ not only of being taught to read and  
 “ write, &c. but divers of them eminent in  
 “ the management of business. He de-  
 “ clares them to have an equal right with  
 “ us to the merits of Christ; of which if  
 “ through neglect or avarice they are de-  
 “ prived, that judgment which was de-  
 “ nounced against wicked Ahab, must  
 “ befall us: *Our life shall go for theirs.* The  
 “ loss of their souls will be required at our  
 “ hands, to whom God hath given so blessed  
 “ an opportunity of being instrumental to  
 “ their salvation.”

He complains, “ That they were suffer-  
 “ ed to live with their women in no  
 “ better way than direct fornication; no  
 “ care being taken to oblige them to conti-  
 “ nue together when married; but that  
 “ they were suffered at their will to leave  
 “ their wives, and take to other women.” I  
 shall conclude this sympathizing clergy-  
 man’s observations, with an instance he  
 gives, to shew, “ that not only discour-  
 “ ragements



“ ragements and scoffs at that time.  
 “ prevailed in Barbadoes, to establish an  
 “ opinion that the Negroes were not capa-  
 “ ble of religious impressions, but that even  
 “ violence and great abuses were used to  
 “ prevent any thing of the kind taking  
 “ place. It was in the case of a poor Negro,  
 “ who having, at his own request, prevail-  
 “ ed on a clergyman to administer baptism  
 “ to him, on his return home the brutish  
 “ overseer took him to task, giving him to  
 “ understand, that that was no Sunday’s  
 “ work for those of his complexion; that he  
 “ had other business for him, the neglect  
 “ whereof should cost him an afternoon’s  
 “ baptism in blood, as he in the morning  
 “ had received a baptism with water, (these,  
 “ says the clergyman, were his own words)  
 “ which he accordingly made good; of  
 “ which the Negro complained to him,  
 “ and he to the governor; nevertheless,  
 “ the poor miserable creature was ever af-  
 “ ter so unmercifully treated by that inhu-  
 “ man wretch, the overseer, that, to avoid  
 “ his cruelty, betaking himself to the woods,  
 “ he there perished.” This instance is ap-  
 plicable to none but the cruel perpetrator;  
 and yet it is an instance of what, in a greater  
 or less degree, may frequently happen, when  
 those poor wretches are left to the will of  
 such brutish inconsiderate creatures as those  
 overseers



overseers often are. This is confirmed in  
 a *History of Jamaica*, wrote in thirteen let-  
 ters, about the year 1740, by a person then  
 residing in that island, who writes as  
 follows, “ I shall not now enter upon the  
 “ question, whether the slavery of the Ne-  
 “ groes be agreeable to the laws of nature  
 “ or not; though it seems extremely hard  
 “ they should be reduced to serve and toil  
 “ for the benefit of others, without the least  
 “ advantage to themselves. Happy Britannia,  
 “ where slavery is never known! where li-  
 “ berty and freedom cheers every misfortune.  
 “ Here (*says the author*) we can boast of no  
 “ such blessing; we have at least ten slaves  
 “ to one freeman. I incline to touch the  
 “ hardships which these poor creatures  
 “ suffer, in the tenderest manner, from  
 “ a particular regard which I have to  
 “ many of their masters, but I cannot con-  
 “ ceal their sad circumstances intirely: the  
 “ most trivial error is punished with terri-  
 “ ble whipping. I have seen some of them  
 “ treated in that cruel manner, for no other  
 “ reason but to satisfy the brutish pleasure  
 “ of an overseer, who has their punishment  
 “ mostly at his discretion. I have seen their  
 “ bodies all in a gore of blood, the skin  
 “ torn off their backs with the cruel whip;  
 “ beaten pepper and salt rubbed in the  
 “ wounds, and a large stick of sealing wax  
 “ dropped



“ dropped leisurely upon them. It is no  
 “ wonder, if the horrid pain of such inhu-  
 “ man tortures incline them to rebel. Most  
 “ of these slaves are brought from the coast  
 “ of Guinea: When they first arrive, it is  
 “ observed, they are simple and very inno-  
 “ cent creatures; but soon turn to be  
 “ roguish enough: And when they come to  
 “ be whipt, urge the example of the whites  
 “ for an excuse of their faults.”

These accounts of the deep depravity of  
 mind attendant on the practice of slavery,  
 verify the truth of Montesquieu's remark of  
 its pernicious effects. And altho' the same  
 degree of opposition to instructing the Ne-  
 groes may not now appear in the islands as  
 formerly, especially since the Society ap-  
 pointed for propagating the Gospel have  
 possessed a number of Negroes in one of them;  
 nevertheless the situation of these oppressed  
 people is yet dreadful, as well to themselves  
 as in its consequence to their hard task-mas-  
 ters, and their offspring, as must be evident  
 to every impartial person who is acquainted  
 with the treatment they generally receive,  
 or with the laws which from time to time  
 have been made in the colonies, with respect  
 to the Negroes; some of them being absolute-  
 ly inconsistent with reason, and shocking to  
 humanity. By the 329th act of the assem-  
 bly of Barbadoes, page 125, it is enact-  
 ed,



ed, “ That if any Negroe or other slave un-  
 “ der punishment by his master, or his or-  
 “ der, for running away, or any other  
 “ crime or misdemeanors towards his said  
 “ master, unfortunately shall suffer in life  
 “ or member, (which seldom happens) no  
 “ person whatsoever shall be liable to any  
 “ fine therefore. But if any man shall, *of*  
 “ *wantonness, or only of bloody-mindedness or*  
 “ *cruel intention, wilfully kill a Negroe, or other*  
 “ *slave of his own, he shall pay into the public*  
 “ *treasury, fifteen pounds sterling.*” Now that  
 the life of a man should be so lightly valued,  
 as that fifteen pounds should be judged a  
 sufficient indemnification of the murder of  
 one, even when it is avowedly done *wil-*  
*fully, wantonly, cruelly, or of bloody-mindedness,*  
 is a tyranny hardly to be paralleled: never-  
 theless human laws cannot make void the  
 righteous law of God, or prevent the inqui-  
 sition of that awful judgment day, when,  
 “ *at the hand of every man’s brother the life of*  
 “ *man shall be required.*” By the law of  
 South Carolina, the person that killeth a  
 Negroe is only subject to a fine, or twelve  
 months imprisonment: It is the same in  
 most, if not all the West-Indies. And by an  
 act of the assembly of Virginia, (4 Ann. Ch.  
 49. sect. 27. p. 227.) after proclamation is  
 issued against slaves, “ that run away and  
 “ lie out, it is lawful for any person what-  
 “ soever







“ souls, are fitter to be called devils incarnate  
“ than christians : It is an heinous sin to buy  
“ them, unless it be in charity to deliver  
“ them. Undoubtedly they are presently  
“ bound to deliver them, because by right  
“ the man is his own, therefore no man else  
“ can have a just title to him.

C H A P.



## C H A P. VIII.

GRIFFITH Hughes's account of the number of Negroes in Barbadoes. Cannot keep up their usual number without a yearly recruit. Excessive hardships wear the Negroes down in a surprising manner. A servitude without a condition, inconsistent with reason and natural justice. The general usage the Negroes meet with in the West Indies. Inhuman calculations of the strength and lives of the Negroes. Dreadful consequences which may be expected from the cruelty exercised upon this oppressed part of mankind.

WE are told by Griffith Hughes, rector of St. Lucy in Barbadoes, in his natural history of that island, printed in the year 1750, " That there were between  
 " sixty-five and seventy thousand Negroes,  
 " at that time, in the island, tho' formerly  
 " they had a greater number: That in order to keep up a necessary number, they  
 " were obliged to have a yearly supply from  
 " Africa: That the hard labour, and often  
 " want



“ want of necessaries, which these unhappy  
 “ creatures are obliged to undergo, destroy  
 “ a greater number than are bred there.” He  
 adds, “ That the capacities of their minds  
 “ in common affairs of life are but little in-  
 “ ferior, if at all, to those of the Europeans.  
 “ If they fail in some arts, he says, it may  
 “ be owing more to their want of education,  
 “ and the depression of their spirits by fla-  
 “ very, than to any want of natural abili-  
 “ ties.” This destruction of the human  
 species, thro’ unnatural hardships, and want  
 of necessary supplies, in the case of the Ne-  
 groes, is farther confirmed in *an account of*  
*the European settlements in America*, printed  
 London, 1757, where it is said, par. 6. chap.  
 11th, “ The Negroes in our colonies en-  
 “ dure a slavery more compleat, and attend-  
 “ ed with far worse circumstances, than  
 “ what any people in their condition suffer  
 “ in any other part of the world,  
 “ or have suffered in any other period of  
 “ time: Proofs of this are not wanting.  
 “ The prodigious waste which we experience  
 “ in this unhappy part of our species, is a  
 “ full and melancholy evidence of this  
 “ truth. The island of Barbadoes, (the Ne-  
 “ groes upon which do not amount to eigh-  
 “ ty thousand) notwithstanding all the  
 “ means which they use to increase them  
 “ by propagation, and that the climate is  
 “ in



“ in every respect (except that of being  
 “ more wholesome) exactly resembling the  
 “ climate from whence they come; notwith-  
 “ standing all this, Barbadoes lies under  
 “ a necessity of an annual recruit of five  
 “ thousand slaves, to keep up the stock at  
 “ the number I have mentioned. This pro-  
 “ digious failure, which is at least in the  
 “ same proportion in all our islands, shews  
 “ demonstratively that some uncommon and  
 “ unsupportable hardship lies upon the Ne-  
 “ groes, which wears them down in such a  
 “ surprizing manner.”

In an account of part of North America,  
 published by Thomas Jeffery, 1761, the au-  
 thor, speaking of the usage the Negroes re-  
 ceive in the West India islands, says, “ It is  
 “ impossible for a human heart to reflect up-  
 “ on the servitude of these dregs of man-  
 “ kind, without in some measure feeling for  
 “ their misery, which ends but with their  
 “ lives.—Nothing can be more wretched  
 “ than the condition of this people. One  
 “ would imagine, they were framed to be  
 “ the disgrace of the human species; banish-  
 “ ed from their country, and deprived of  
 “ that blessing, liberty, on which all other  
 “ nations set the greatest value, they are in  
 “ a measure reduced to the condition of  
 “ beasts of burden. In general, a few roots,  
 “ potatoes especially, are their food, and  
 “ two



“ two rags, which neither screen them from  
 “ the heat of the day, nor the extraordinary  
 “ coolness of the night, all their covering;  
 “ their sleep very short; their labour almost  
 “ continual: they receive no wages, but  
 “ have twenty lashes for the smallest fault.”

*A thoughtful* person, who had an opportunity of observing the miserable condition of the Negroes in one of our West India islands, writes thus, “ I met with daily exercise to see the treatment which those miserable wretches met with from their masters; with but few exceptions. They whip them most unmercifully on small occasions: you will see their bodies all whealed and scarred; in short, they seem to set no other value on their lives, than as they cost them so much money; and are restrained from killing them, when angry, by no worthier consideration, than that they lose so much. They act as though they did not look upon them as a race of human creatures, who have reason, and remembrance of misfortunes, but as beasts; like oxen, who are stubborn, hardy, and senseless, fit for burdens, and designed to bear them: they won't allow them to have any claim to human privileges, or scarce indeed to be regarded as the work of God. Though it was consistent with the justice of our Maker to pronounce

“ the



“ the sentence on our common parent,  
 “ and through him on all succeeding genera-  
 “ tions, *That he and they should eat their*  
 “ *bread by the sweat of their brows:* yet does  
 “ it not stand recorded by the same eternal  
 “ truth, *That the labourer is worthy of his*  
 “ *hire?* It cannot be allowed, in natural  
 “ justice, that there should be a servi-  
 “ tude without condition; a cruel, endless  
 “ servitude. It cannot be reconcileable to  
 “ natural justice, that whole nations, nay,  
 “ whole continents of men, should be de-  
 “ voted to do the drudgery of life for others,  
 “ be dragged away from their attachments  
 “ of relations and societies, and be made to  
 “ serve the appetite and pleasure of a race  
 “ of men, whose superiority has been ob-  
 “ tained by illegal force”

Sir Hans Sloane, in the introduction to his  
 natural history of Jamaica, in the account he  
 gives of the treatment the Negroes met with  
 there, speaking of the punishments inflicted  
 on them, says, page 56. “ For rebellion, the  
 “ punishment is burning them, by nailing  
 “ them down to the ground with crook-  
 “ ed sticks on every limb, and then apply-  
 “ ing the fire, by degrees, from the feet and  
 “ hands, burning them gradually up to the  
 “ head, whereby *their pains are extrava-*  
 “ *gant.* For crimes of a less nature, gelding  
 “ or chopping off half the foot with an axe.

N

“ ——— For



“ ————For negligence, they are usually  
 “ whipped by the overseers with lance-wood  
 “ switches.———After they are whipped  
 “ till they are raw, some put on their skins  
 “ pepper and salt, to make them smart; at  
 “ other times, their masters will drop melted  
 “ wax on their skins, and use several *very*  
 “ *exquisite torments.*” In that island, the  
 owners of the Negroe slaves set aside to  
 each a parcel of ground, and allow them half  
 a day at the latter end of the week, which,  
 with the day appointed by the divine in-  
 junction to be a day of rest and service to  
 God, and which ought to be kept as such,  
 is the only time allowed them to manure  
 their ground. This, with a few herrings,  
 or other salt fish, is what is given for their  
 support. Their allowance for cloathing in  
 the island, is seldom more than six yards of  
 oznabrigs each year. And in the more  
 northern colonies, where the piercing west-  
 erly winds are long and sensibly felt, these  
 poor Africans suffer much for want of suffi-  
 cient cloathing; indeed some have none till  
 they are able to pay for it by their labour.  
 The time that the Negroes work in the  
 West Indies, is from day-break till noon;  
 then again from two o’clock till dark (dur-  
 ing which time, they are attended by over-  
 seers, who severely scourge those who appear  
 to them dilatory); and before they are suf-  
 fered



ferred to go to their quarters, they have still something to do, as collecting herbage for the horses, gathering fuel for the boilers, &c. so that it is often past twelve before they can get home, when they have scarce time to grind and boil their Indian corn; whereby, if their food was not prepared the evening before, it sometimes happens that they are called again to labour before they can satisfy their hunger. And here no delay or excuse will avail; for if they are not in the field immediately upon the usual notice, they must expect to feel the overseer's lash. In crop time (which lasts many months) they are obliged, by turns, to work most of the night in the boiling house. Thus their owners, from a desire of making the greatest gain by the labour of their slaves, lay heavy burdens on them, and yet feed and cloath them very sparingly, and some scarce feed or cloath them at all; so that the poor creatures are obliged to shift for their living in the best manner they can, which occasions their being often killed in the neighbouring lands, stealing potatoes, or other food, to satisfy their hunger. And if they take any thing from the plantation they belong to, though under such pressing want, their owners will correct them severely for taking a little of what they have so hardly laboured for; whilst many of themselves riot in the greatest



luxury and excess. It is matter of astonishment how a people, who, as a nation, are looked upon as generous and humane, and so much value themselves for their uncommon sense of the benefit of liberty, can live in the practice of such extreme oppression and inhumanity, without seeing the inconsistency of such conduct, and feeling great remorse. Nor is it less amazing to hear these men calmly making calculations about the strength and lives of their fellow men. In Jamaica, if six in ten of the new imported Negroes survive the seasoning, it is looked upon as a gaining purchase. And in most of the other plantations, if the Negroes live eight or nine years, their labour is reckoned a sufficient compensation for their cost. If calculations of this sort were made upon the strength and labour of beasts of burden, it would not appear so strange; but even then, a merciful man would certainly use his beast with more mercy than is usually shewn to the poor Negroes. Will not the groans, the dying groans, of this deeply afflicted and oppressed people reach heaven? and when the cup of iniquity is full, must not the inevitable consequence be, the pouring forth of the judgments of God upon their oppressors? But alas! is it not too manifest that this oppression has already long been the object of the divine displeasure? For what heavier judgment,



judgment, what greater calamity, can befall any people, than to become subject to that hardness of heart, that forgetfulness of God, and insensibility to every religious impression, as well as that general depravation of manners, which so much prevails in these colonies, in proportion as they have more or less enriched themselves at the expence of the blood and bondage of the Negroes.

It is a dreadful consideration, as a late author remarks, that out of the stock of eighty thousand Negroes in Barbadoes, there die every year five thousand more than are born in that island; which failure is probably in the same proportion in the other islands. *In effect, this people is under a necessity of being entirely renewed every sixteen years.* And what must we think of the management of a people, who, far from increasing greatly, as those who have no loss by war ought to do, must, in so short a time as sixteen years, without foreign recruits, be entirely consumed to a man! Is it not a christian doctrine, *that the labourer is worthy of his hire?* And hath not the Lord, by the mouth of his prophet, pronounced, “*Wo unto that man*  
“*who buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and*  
“*his chambers by wrong; who useth his neighbour's*  
“*service without wages, and giveth him nought*  
“*for his work?*” And yet the poor Negro slaves are constrained, like the beasts, by  
beating



beating, to work hard without hire or recompence, and receive nothing from the hand of their unmerciful masters, but such a wretched provision as will scarce support them under their fatigues. The intolerable hardships many of the slaves undergo, are sufficiently proved by the shortness of their lives. ——— And who are these miserable creatures, that receive such barbarous treatment from the planter? Can we restrain our just indignation, when we consider that they are undoubtedly *his brethren! his neighbours! the children of the same Father, and some of those for whom Christ died, as truly as for the planter himself.* Let the opulent planter, or merchant, prove that his Negro slave is not his brother, or that he is not his neighbour, in the scripture sense of these appellations; and if he is not able so to do, how will he justify the buying and selling of his brethren, as if they were of no more consideration than his cattle? The wearing them out with continual labour, before they have lived out half their days? The severe whipping and torturing them, even to death, if they resist his insupportable tyranny? Let the hardiest slave-holder look forward to that tremendous day, when he must give an account to God of his stewardship; and let him seriously consider, whether, at such a time, he thinks he shall be able to satisfy himself,



himself, that any act of buying and selling, or the fate of war, or the birth of children in his house, plantation, or territories, or any other circumstance whatever, can give him such an absolute property in the persons of men, as will justify his retaining them as slaves, and treating them as beasts? Let him diligently consider whether there will not always remain to the slave a *superior* property or right to the fruit of his own labour; and more especially to his own person; that being which was given him by God, and which none but the Giver can justly claim?

C H A P,



## C H A P. IX.

THE advantage which would have accrued to the natives of Guinea, if the Europeans had acted towards them agreeable to the dictates of humanity and christianity. *An inordinate* desire of gain in the Europeans, the true occasion of the slave trade. Notice of the misrepresentations of the Negroes by most authors, in order to palliate the iniquity of the slave trade. Those misrepresentations refuted, particularly with respect to the *Hottentot Negroes*.

FROM the foregoing accounts of the natural disposition of the Negroes, and the fruitfulness of most parts of Guinea, which are confirmed by authors of candour, who have wrote from their own knowledge, it may well be concluded, that the Negroes acquaintance with the Europeans might have been a happiness to them, if these last had not only bore the name, but had also acted the part, of Christians, and used their endeavours by example, as well as precept, to make them acquainted with the  
glad



glad tidings of the gospel, which breathes peace and good will to man, and with that change of heart, that redemption from sin, which christianity proposeth; innocence and love might then have prevailed, nothing would have been wanting to complete the happiness of the simple Africans: but the reverse has happened; the Europeans, forgetful of their duty as men and christians, have conducted themselves in so iniquitous a manner, as must necessarily raise in the minds of the thoughtful and well-disposed Negroes, the utmost scorn and detestation of the very name of christians. All other considerations have given way to an insatiable desire of gain, which has been the principal and moving cause of the most *iniquitous and dreadful scene* that was, perhaps, ever acted upon the face of the earth; instead of making use of that superior knowledge with which the Almighty, the common Parent of mankind, had favoured them, to strengthen the principle of peace and good will in the breasts of the incautious Negroes, the Europeans have, by their bad example, led them into excess of drunkenness, debauchery, and avarice; whereby every passion of corrupt nature being inflamed, they have been easily prevailed upon to make war, and captivate one another; as well to furnish means for the excesses they had been habi-

O

tuated



tuated to, as to satisfy the greedy desire of gain in their profligate employers, who to this intent have furnished them with prodigious quantities of arms and ammunition. Thus they have been hurried into confusion, distress, and all the extremities of temporal misery; every thing, even the power of their Kings, has been made subservient to this wicked purpose; for instead of being protectors of their subjects, some of those rulers, corrupted by the excessive love of spirituous liquors, and the tempting baits laid before them by the factors, have invaded the liberties of their unhappy subjects, and are become their oppressors.

Here it may be necessary to observe, that the accounts we have of the inhabitants of Guinea, are chiefly given by persons engaged in the trade, who, from self-interested views, have described them in such colours as were least likely to excite compassion and respect, and endeavoured to reconcile so manifest a violation of the rights of mankind to the minds of the purchasers; yet they cannot but allow the Negroes to be possessed of some good qualities, though they contrive as much as possible to cast a shade over them. A particular instance of this appears in Astley's collection, vol. 2. p. 73, where the author, speaking of the Mandingos settled at Galem, which is situated 900 miles up the  
Senegal,



Senegal, after saying that they carry on a commerce to all the neighbouring kingdoms, and amass riches, adds, "That excepting *the vices peculiar to the Blacks*, they are a good sort of people, honest, hospitable, just to their word, laborious, industrious, and very ready to learn arts and sciences." Here it is difficult to imagine what vices can be peculiarly attendant on a people so well disposed as the author describes these to be. With respect to the charge some authors have brought against them, as being void of all natural affection, it is frequently contradicted by others. In vol. 2. of the Collection, p. 275, and 629, the Negroes of North Guinea, and the Gold Coast, are said *to be fond of their children, whom they love with tenderness*. And Bosman says, p. 340, "Not a few in his country (viz. Holland) fondly imagine, that parents here sell their children, men their wives, and one brother the other: but those who think so deceive themselves; for this never happens on any other account but that of necessity, or some great crime." The same is repeated by J. Barbot, page 326, and also confirmed by Sir Hans Sloane, in the introduction to his natural history of Jamaica; where speaking of the Negroes, he says, "They are usually thought to be haters of their own  
 O 2 " children,



“ children, and therefore it is believed that  
 “ they sell and dispose of them to strangers  
 “ for money: but this is not true; for the  
 “ Negroes of Guinea being divided into  
 “ several captainships, as well as the Indians  
 “ of America, have wars; and besides those  
 “ slain in battle, many prisoners are taken,  
 “ who are sold as slaves, and brought thither:  
 “ but the parents here, although their chil-  
 “ dren are slaves for ever, yet have so great  
 “ love for them, that no master dares sell,  
 “ or give away, one of their little ones,  
 “ unless they care not whether their parents  
 “ hang themselves or no.” J. Barbot,  
 speaking of the occasion of the natives of  
 Guinea being represented as a treacherous  
 people, ascribes it to the Hollanders (and  
 doubtless other Europeans) usurping autho-  
 rity, and fomenting divisions between the  
 Negroes. At page 110, he says, “ It is well  
 “ known that many of the European nations  
 “ trading amongst these people, have very  
 “ unjustly and inhumanly, without any  
 “ provocation, stolen away, from time to  
 “ time, abundance of the people, not only  
 “ on this coast, but almost every where in  
 “ Guinea, who have come on board their  
 “ ships in a harmless and confiding manner:  
 “ these they have in great numbers car-  
 “ ried away, and sold in the plantations, with  
 “ other slaves which they had purchased.”

And



And although some of the Negroes may be justly charged with indolence and supineness, yet many others are frequently mentioned by authors as a *careful, industrious, and even laborious* people. But nothing shews more clearly how unsafe it is to form a judgment of distant people from the accounts given of them by travellers, who have taken but a transient view of things, than the case of the Hottentots, viz. those several nations of Negroes who inhabit the most southern part of Africa: *these people* are represented by several authors, who appear to have very much copied their relations one from the other, as so savage and barbarous as to have little of human, but the shape: but these accounts are strongly contradicted by others, particularly Peter Kolben, who has given a circumstantial relation of the disposition and manners of those people. \* He was a man of learning, sent from the court of Prussia solely to make astronomical and natural observations there; and having no interest in the slavery of the Negroes, had not the same inducement as most other relators had, to misrepresent the natives of Africa. He resided eight years at and about the Cape of Good Hope, during which time he examined with great care into the customs, manners, and

---

\* See Kolben's account of the Cape of Good Hope.



and opinions of the Hottentots; whence he sets these people in a quite different light from what they appeared in former authors, whom he corrects, and blames for the falsehoods they have wantonly told of them. At p. 61, he says, “The details we have in several authors, are for the most part made up of inventions and hearsays, which generally prove false.” Nevertheless, he allows they are justly to be blamed for their sloth. —*The love of liberty and indolence is their all: compulsion is death to them. While necessity obliges them to work, they are very tractable, obedient, and faithful; but when they have got enough to satisfy the present want, they are deaf to all further intreaty.* He also faults them for their nastiness, the effect of sloth; and for their love of drink, and the practice of some unnatural customs, which long use has established amongst them; which, nevertheless, from the general good disposition of these people, there is great reason to believe they might be persuaded to refrain from, if a truly christian care had been extended towards them. He says, “They are eminently distinguished by many virtues, as their mutual benevolence, friendship, and hospitality; they breathe kindness and good will to one another, and seek all opportunities of obliging. Is a Hottentot’s



“tentot’s assistance required by one of his  
 “countrymen? he runs to give it. Is his ad-  
 “vice asked? he gives it with sincerity. Is  
 “his countryman in want? he relieves him to  
 “the utmost of his power.” Their hospitality  
 extends even to European strangers: in tra-  
 velling thro’ the Cape countries, you meet with  
 a chearful and open reception, in whatso-  
 ever village you come to. In short, he says,  
 page 339, “The integrity of the Hotten-  
 “tots, their strictness and celerity in the  
 “execution of justice, and their charity, are  
 “equalled by few nations. *In alliances, their*  
 “*word is sacred; there being hardly any thing*  
 “*they look upon as a fouler crime than breach*  
 “*of engagements. Theft and adultery they*  
 “*punish with death.*” They firmly believe  
 there is a God, the author of all things,  
 whom they call the God of gods; but it  
 does not appear that they have an institution  
 of worship directly regarding this supreme  
 Deity. When pressed on this article, they  
 excuse themselves by a tradition, “*That*  
 “*their first parents so grievously offended*  
 “*this great God, that he cursed them and their*  
 “*posterity with hardness of heart; so that*  
 “*they know little about him, and have less in-*  
 “*clination to serve him.*” As has been al-  
 ready remarked, these Hottentots are the  
 only Negroe nations bordering on the sea,  
 we read of, who are not concerned in mak-  
 ing



ing or keeping slaves. Those slaves made use of by the Hollanders at the Cape, are brought from other parts of Guinea. Numbers of these people told the author, “ That  
“ the vices they saw prevail amongst christians; their avarice, their envy and hatred of one another; their restless discontented tempers; their lasciviousness and  
“ injustice, were the things that principally kept the Hottentots from hearkening to  
“ christianity.”

Father Tachard, a French Jesuit, famous for his travels in the East Indies, in his account of these people, says, “ The Hottentots have more honesty, love, and liberality for one another, than are almost any  
“ where seen amongst christians.”



## C H A P. X.

MAN-stealing esteemed highly criminal, and punishable by the laws of Guinea: *No* Negroes allowed to be sold for slaves there, but those deemed prisoners of war, or in punishment for crimes. *Some* of the Negroe rulers, corrupted by the Europeans, violently infringe the laws of Guinea. The King of Barfailay noted in that respect.

**B**Y an inquiry into the laws and customs formerly in use, and still in force amongst the Negroes, particularly on the Gold Coast, it will be found, that provision was made for the general peace, and for the safety of individuals; even in W. Bosman's time, long after the Europeans had established the slave-trade, the natives were not publicly enslaved, any otherwise than in punishment for crimes, when prisoners of war, or by a violent exertion of the power of their corrupted Kings. Where any of the natives were stolen, in order to be sold to the Europeans, it was done secretly, or at least, only connived at by those in power:

P

this



this appears from Barbot and Bosman's account of the matter, both agreeing that man-stealing was not allowed on the Gold Coast. The first \* says, *Kidnaping or stealing of human creatures is punished there, and even sometimes with death.* And W. Bosman, whose long residence on the coast, enabled him to speak with certainty, says, † *That the laws were severe against murder, thievery, and adultery.* And adds, *That man-stealing was punished on the Gold Coast with rigid severity and sometimes with death itself.* Hence it may be concluded, that the sale of the greatest part of the Negroes to the Europeans is supported by violence, in defiance of the laws, through the knavery of their principal men, ‡ who, (as is too often the case with those in European countries) under pretence of encouraging trade, and increasing the public revenue, disregard the dictates of justice, and trample upon those liberties which they are appointed to preserve.

Fr. Moor also mentions man-stealing as being discountenanced by the Negroe Governments

---

\* Barbot, p. 303.

† Bosman, p. 143.

‡ Note. Barbot, page 270, says, the trade of slaves is in a more peculiar manner the business of Kings, rich men, and prime merchants, exclusive of the inferior sort of blacks.



vernments on the river Gambia, and speaks of the inflaving the peaceable inhabitants, as a violence which only happens under a corrupt administration of justice; he says, “ \* The Kings of that country  
 “ generally advise with their head men,  
 “ scarcely doing any thing of consequence,  
 “ without consulting them first, except  
 “ the King of Barfailay, who being subject  
 “ to hard drinking, is very absolute. It is  
 “ to this King’s infatiable thirst for brandy,  
 “ that his subjects freedoms and families  
 “ are in so precarious a situation:”  
 “ † Whenever this King wants goods or  
 “ brandy, he sends a messenger to the English  
 “ Governor at James Fort, to desire he  
 “ would send a sloop there with a cargo:  
 “ *this news, being not at all unwelcome,* the  
 “ Governor sends accordingly; against the  
 “ arrival of the sloop, the King goes and  
 “ ransacks some of his enemies towns,  
 “ seizing the people, and selling them for  
 “ such commodities as he is in want of,  
 “ which commonly are brandy, guns, powder,  
 “ balls, pistols, and cutlasses, for his attendants  
 “ and soldiers; and coral and silver for his wives  
 “ and concubines. In case  
 “ he is not at war with any neighbouring  
 “ King, he then falls upon one of his own  
 “ towns, which are numerous, and uses  
 “ them in the same manner:” “ He often

P 2

“ goes

\* Moor, page 61.

† Idem, p. 46.



“ goes with some of his troops by a town in  
 “ the day time, and returning in the night,  
 “ sets fire to three parts of it, and putting  
 “ guards at the fourth, there seizes the peo-  
 “ ple as they run out from the fire; he ties  
 “ their arms behind them, and marches them  
 “ either to Joar or Cohone, where he sells  
 “ them to the Europeans.”

A. Brue, the French director, gives  
 much the same account, and says, \* “ That  
 “ having received goods, he wrote to the  
 “ King, that if he had a sufficient number  
 “ of slaves, he was ready to trade with him.  
 “ This Prince, as well as the other Negroe  
 “ monarchs, has always a sure way of sup-  
 “ plying his deficiencies, by selling his own  
 “ subjects, for which they seldom want a  
 “ pretence. The King had recourse to this  
 “ method, by seizing three hundred of his  
 “ own people, and sent word to the di-  
 “ rector, that he had the slaves ready to  
 “ deliver for the goods.” It seems, the  
 King wanted double the quantity of goods  
 which the factor would give him for these  
 three hundred slaves; but the factor re-  
 fusing to trust him, as he was already in  
 the company's debt, and perceiving that this  
 refusal had put the King much out of tem-  
 per, he proposed that he should give him  
 a licence for taking so many more of his  
 people, as the goods he still wanted were  
 worth;

---

\* Collection vol. 2, p. 29.



worth; but this the King refused, saying  
 “ *It might occasion a disturbance amongst*  
 “ *his subjects.*”\* Except in the above in-  
 stance, and some others, where the power  
 of the Negroe Kings is unlawfully exerted  
 over their subjects, the slave-trade is carried  
 on in Guinea with some regard to the laws  
 of the country, which allow of none to be  
 sold, but prisoners taken in their national  
 wars, or people adjudged to slavery in pu-  
 nishment for crimes; but the largeness of  
 the

---

\* Note, This Negroe King thus refusing to com-  
 ply with the factor’s wicked proposal, shews, he was  
 sensible his own conduct was not justifiable; and it  
 likewise appears, the factor’s only concern was to pro-  
 cure the greatest number of slaves, without any re-  
 gard to the injustice of the method by which they  
 were procured. This Andrew Brue, was, for a long  
 time, principal director of the French African factory  
 in those parts; in the management of which, he is in  
 the collection said to have had extraordinary success.  
 The part he ought to have acted as a christian towards  
 the ignorant Africans seems quite out of the question;  
 the profit of his employers appears to have been his  
 sole concern. At page 62, speaking of the country on  
 the Senegal river, he says, “ It was very populous, the  
 “ soil rich; and if the people were industrious, they  
 “ might, of their own produce, carry on a very advan-  
 “ tageous trade with strangers; there being but few  
 “ things in which they could be excelled; *but* (he adds)  
 “ *it is to be hoped, the Europeans will never let them into*  
 “ *the secret.*” A remark unbecoming humanity, much  
 more christianity!



the country, the number of kingdoms or commonwealths, and the great encouragement given by the Europeans, afford frequent pretences and opportunities to the bold designing profligates of one kingdom, to surprize and seize upon not only those of a neighbouring government, but also the weak and helpless of their own;\* and the unhappy people, taken on those occasions, are, with impunity, sold to the Europeans. These practices are doubtless disapproved of by the most considerate amongst the Negroes, for Bosman acquaints us, that even their national wars are not agreeable to such. He says, † “ If the person who occasioned the  
 “ beginning of the war be taken, they will  
 “ not easily admit him to ransom, though his  
 “ weight in gold should be offered, for fear  
 “ he should in future form some new design  
 “ against their repose.”

## C H A P.

---

\* This inhuman practice is particularly described by Brue, in collect. vol. 2. page 98, where he says, “ That  
 “ some of the natives are, on all occasions, endeavour-  
 “ ing to surprize and carry off their country people.  
 “ They land (says he) without noise, and if they find a  
 “ lone cottage, without defence, they surround it, and  
 “ carry off all the people and effects to their boat, and  
 “ immediately reembark.” This seems to be mostly practised by some Negroes who dwell on the sea coast.

† Bosman, p. 155.



## C H A P. XI.

AN account of the shocking inhumanity, used in the carrying on of the slave-trade, as described by factors of different nations, viz. by Francis Moor, on the river Gambia; and by John Barbot, A. Brue, and William Bosman, through the coast of Guinea. *Note.* Of the large revenues arising to the Kings of Guinea from the slave-trade.

FIRST, Francis Moor, factor for the English African company, on the river Gambia, \* writes, “ That there are a number of Negro traders, called joncoes, or merchants, who follow the slave-trade as a business; their place of residence is so high up in the country as to be six weeks travel from James Fort, which is situate at the mouth of that river. These merchants bring down elephants teeth, and in some years two thousand slaves, most of which, they say, are prisoners taken in war. They buy them from the  
“ different

---

\* Moor, page 28.



“ different Princes who take them; many  
 “ of them are Bumbrongs and Petcharies;  
 “ nations, who each of them have different  
 “ languages, and are brought from a vast  
 “ way inland. Their way of bringing them  
 “ is tying them by the neck with leather  
 “ thongs, at about a yard distant from each  
 “ other, thirty or forty in a string, having  
 “ generally a bundle of corn or elephants  
 “ teeth upon each of their heads. In their  
 “ way from the mountains, they travel thro’  
 “ very great woods, where they cannot for  
 “ some days get water; so they carry in skin  
 “ bags enough to support them for a time.  
 “ I cannot (adds Moor) be certain of the  
 “ number of merchants who follow this  
 “ trade, but there may, perhaps, be about  
 “ an hundred, who go up into the inland  
 “ country, with the goods which they buy  
 “ from the white men, and with them pur-  
 “ chase, in various countries, gold, slaves,  
 “ and elephants teeth. Besides the slaves,  
 “ which the merchants bring down, there  
 “ are many bought along the river: These  
 “ are either taken in war, as the former are,  
 “ or men condemned for crimes; *or else peo-  
 “ ple stolen, which is very frequent.*—Since the  
 “ slave-trade has been used, all punishments  
 “ are changed into slavery; there being an  
 “ advantage on such condemnation, *they*  
 “ *strain*



“ strain for crimes very hard, in order to get the  
 “ benefit of selling the criminal.”

John Barbot, the French factor, in his account of the manner by which the slaves are procured, says, “ \* The slaves sold by  
 “ the Negroes, are for the most part prison-  
 “ ers of war, or taken in the incursions  
 “ they make in their enemies territories;  
 “ others are stolen away by their neigh-  
 “ bours, when found abroad on the road,  
 “ or in the woods; or else in the corn  
 “ fields, at the time of the year when their  
 “ parents keep them there all the day to  
 “ scare away the devouring small birds.”  
 Speaking of the transactions on that part of  
 Guinea called the Slave Coast, where the  
 Europeans have the most factories, and  
 from whence they bring away much the  
 greatest number of slaves, the same author,  
 and also Bosman † says, “ The inhabitants  
 “ of Coto do much mischief, in stealing those  
 “ slaves they sell to the Europeans, from the  
 “ upland country.—That the inhabitants  
 “ of Popo excell the former; being en-  
 “ dowed with a much larger share of cou-  
 “ rage, they rob more successfully, by  
 “ which means they increase their riches  
 “ and trade.” The author particularly re-  
 Q marks,

---

\* John Barbot, page 47.

† Bosman, page 310.



marks, “ *That they are encouraged in this*  
 “ *practice by the Europeans; sometimes it*  
 “ *happens, according to the success of their*  
 “ *inland excursions, that they are able to*  
 “ *furnish two hundred slaves or more, in a*  
 “ *few days.*” And he says, “ \* *The blacks*  
 “ *of Fida, or Whidah, are so expeditious in*  
 “ *trading for slaves, that they can deliver a*  
 “ *thousand every month.*”——“ *If there*  
 “ *happens to be no stock of slaves there,*  
 “ *the factor must trust the blacks with his*  
 “ *goods, to the value of one hundred and*  
 “ *fifty, or two hundred pounds; which goods*  
 “ *they carry up into the inland country,*  
 “ *to buy slaves at all markets †, for above*  
 “ *fix*

---

\* Barbot, page 326.

† When the great income which arises to the Negroe Kings on the Slave-Coast, from the slaves brought thro’ their several governments, to be shipped on board the European vessels, is considered, we have no cause to wonder that they give so great a countenance to that trade: William Bosman says, page 337, “ *That*  
 “ *each ship which comes to Whidah to trade, reckoning one*  
 “ *with another, either by toll, trade, or custom, pays*  
 “ *about four hundred pounds, and sometimes fifty ships*  
 “ *come hither in a year.*” Barbot confirms the same, and adds, page 350, “ *That in the neighbouring kingdom of*  
 “ *Ardah, the duty to the King is the value of seventy or*  
 “ *eighty slaves for each trading ship.*” Which is near half as much more as at Whidah; nor can the Europeans, concerned in the trade, with any degree of propriety, blame the African Kings for countenancing it, while  
 they



“ six hundred miles up the country, where  
 “ they are kept like cattle in Europe; the  
 “ slaves sold there being generally prisoners  
 “ of war, taken from their enemies like  
 “ other booty, and perhaps some few sold  
 “ by their own countrymen, in extreme  
 “ want, or upon a famine, as also some as a  
 “ punishment of heinous crimes.” So far  
 Barbot’s account; that given by William  
 Bosman is as follows: “ \* When the slaves  
 “ which are brought from the inland coun-  
 “ tries come to Whidah, they are put in  
 “ prison together; when we treat concern-  
 “ ing buying them, they are all brought out  
 “ together in a large plain, where, by our  
 “ surgeons, they are thoroughly examined,  
 “ and that naked, both men and women,  
 “ without the least distinction or modesty.†

Q 2

“ Those

---

they continue to send vessels, on purpose to take in the slaves which are thus stolen, and that they are permitted, under the sanction of national laws, to sell them to the colonies.

\* Bosman, page 340.

† Note, from the above account of the indecent and shocking manner in which the unhappy Negroes are treated, it is reasonable for persons unacquainted with these people, to conclude them to be void of that natural modesty, so becoming a reasonable creature; but those who have had intercourse with the Blacks in these northern colonies, know that this would be a wrong conclusion, for they are indeed as susceptible of modesty and shame as other people. It is the un-parallel’d



“ Those which are approved as good, are set  
 “ on one side; in the mean while a burning  
 “ iron, with the arms or name of the com-  
 “ pany, lies in the fire, with which ours are  
 “ marked on the breast. When we have a-  
 “ greed with the owners of the slaves, they  
 “ are returned to their prisons, where, from  
 “ that time forward, they are kept at our  
 “ charge, and cost us two pence a day each  
 “ slave, which serves to subsist them like cri-  
 “ minals on bread and water; so that to  
 “ save

---

parallel'd brutality, to which the Europeans have, by long custom, been inured, which urgeth them, without blushing, to act so shameful a part. Such usage is certainly grievous to the poor Negroes, particularly the women; but they are slaves, and must submit to this, or any other abuse that is offered them by their cruel task-masters, or expect to be inhumanly tormented into acquiescence. That the Blacks are unaccustomed to such brutality, appears from an instance mentioned in Astley's collection, vol. 2. page 201, viz.

“ At an audience which Casseneuve had of the King  
 “ of Congo, where he was used with a great deal of  
 “ civility by the Blacks, some slaves were delivered  
 “ to him. The King observing Casseneuve (according  
 “ to the custom of the Europeans) to handle the  
 “ limbs of the slaves, burst out a laughing, as did  
 “ the great men about him: the factor asking the  
 “ interpreter the occasion of their mirth, was told  
 “ it proceeded from his so nicely examining the slaves.  
 “ Nevertheless, *the King was so ashamed of it, that he*  
 “ *desired him, for decency's sake, to do it in a more private*  
*manner.*”



“ save charges, we send them on board our  
“ ships the very first opportunity; before  
“ which, their masters strip them of all they  
“ have on their backs, so that they come on  
“ board stark naked, as well women as men.  
“ In which condition they are obliged to  
“ continue, if the master of the ship is not  
“ so charitable (which he commonly is) as to  
“ bestow something on them to cover their  
“ nakedness. Six or seven hundred are  
“ sometimes put on board a vessel, where  
“ they lie as close together as it is possible  
“ for them to be crowded.”

C H A P.



## C H A P. XII.

**EXTRACTS** of several Journals of Voyages to the coast of Guinea for slaves, whereby the extreme inhumanity of that traffick is described. *Melancholy* account of a ship blown up on that coast, with a great number of Negroes on board. *Instances* of shocking barbarity perpetrated by masters of vessels towards their slaves. *Inquiry* why these scandalous infringements, both of divine and human laws, are overlooked by the government.

**T**HE misery and bloodshed attendant on the slave-trade, are set forth by the following extracts of two voyages to the coast of Guinea for slaves. The first in a vessel from Liverpool, taken *verbatim* from the original manuscript of the Surgeon's Journal, *viz.*

“ Sestro, December the 29th, 1724, No  
 “ trade to day, though many traders came  
 “ on board; they informed us, that the  
 “ people are gone to war within land, and  
 “ will bring prisoners enough in two or  
 “ three days, in hopes of which we stay.”

The



The 30th. “ No trade yet, but our traders came on board to day, and informed us the people had burnt four towns of their enemies, so that to-morrow we expect slaves off: another large ship is come in. Yesterday came in a large Londoner.”

The 31st. “ Fair weather, but no trade yet; we see each night towns burning, but we hear the Sestro men are many of them killed by the inland Negroes, so that we fear this war will be unsuccessful.”

The 2d of January. “ Last night we saw a prodigious fire break out about eleven o’clock, and this morning see the town of Sestro burnt down to the ground; (it contained some hundreds of houses) so that we find their enemies are too hard for them at present, and consequently our trade spoiled here; therefore, about seven o’clock, we weighed anchor, as did likewise the three other vessels, to proceed lower down.”

The second relation, also taken from the original manuscript Journal of a person of credit, who went surgeon on the same trade, in a vessel from New-York, about twenty years past, is as follows; *viz.* “ Being on the coast, the Commander of the vessel, according to custom, sent a person on shore with a present to the King, acquainting  
— him



“ him with his arrival, and letting him  
 “ know, they wanted a cargo of slaves. The  
 “ King promised to furnish them with the  
 “ slaves; and, in order to do it, set out to  
 “ go to war against his enemies; designing  
 “ to surprize some town, and take all the  
 “ people prisoners. Some time after, the  
 “ King sent them word, he had not yet met  
 “ with the desired success; having been  
 “ twice repulsed, in attempting to break up  
 “ two towns, but that he still hoped to pro-  
 “ cure a number of slaves for them; and in  
 “ this design he persisted, till he met his ene-  
 “ mies in the field, where a battle was  
 “ fought, which lasted three days, during  
 “ which time the engagement was so bloody  
 “ that four thousand five hundred men  
 “ were slain on the spot.” The person who  
 wrote the account, beheld the bodies, as  
 they lay on the field of battle. “ Think  
 “ (says he in his Journal) what a pitiable  
 “ sight it was, to see the widows weeping  
 “ over their lost husbands, orphans deplor-  
 “ ing the loss of their fathers, &c. &c.” In  
 the 6th vol. of Churchill’s collection of Voy-  
 ages, page 219, we have the relation of a  
 voyage performed by Captain Philips, in a  
 ship of 450 tuns, along the coast of Guinea,  
 for elephants teeth, gold, and Negroe slaves,  
 intended for Barbadoes; in which he says,  
 that they took “ seven hundred slaves on  
 “ board,



“ board, the men being all put in irons two  
 “ by two, shackled together to prevent their  
 “ mutinying or swimming ashore. That the  
 “ Negroes are so loth to leave their own  
 “ country, that they often leap out of the  
 “ canoe, boat, or ship, into the sea, and keep  
 “ under water till they are drowned, to  
 “ avoid being taken up, and saved by the  
 “ boats which pursue them.”——They  
 had about twelve Negroes who willingly  
 drowned themselves; others starved them-  
 selves to death.——Philips was advised  
 to cut off the legs and arms of some to ter-  
 rify the rest, (as other Captains had done)  
 but this he refused to do. From the time of  
 his taking the Negroes on board, to his ar-  
 rival at Barbadoes, no less than three hun-  
 dred and twenty died of various diseases\*.

R

Reader,

---

*\* The following relation is inserted at the request of the  
 author.*

**T**HAT I may contribute all in my power towards  
 the good of mankind, by inspiring any indivi-  
 duals with a suitable abhorrence of that detestable prac-  
 tice of trading in our fellow-creatures, and in some mea-  
 sure atone for my neglect of duty as a Christian, in en-  
 gaging in that wicked traffic, I offer to their serious con-  
 sideration some few occurrences, of which I was an eye-  
 witness; that being struck with the wretched and affect-  
 ing scene, they may foster that humane principle, which  
 is the noble and distinguished characteristic of man, and  
 improve it to the benefit of their children's children.

About



Reader, bring the matter home to thy own heart, and consider whether any situation can be more completely miserable than that of these

---

About the year 1749, I sailed from Liverpool to the coast of Guinea. Some time after our arrival, I was ordered to go up the country a considerable distance, upon having notice from one of the Negro Kings, that he had a parcel of slaves to dispose of. I received my instructions, and went, carrying with me an account of such goods as we had on board, to exchange for the slaves we intended to purchase. Upon being introduced, I presented him with a small case of English spirits, a gun, and some trifles; which having accepted, and understood by an interpreter what goods we had, the next day was appointed for viewing the slaves; we found about two hundred confined in one place. But here how shall I relate the affecting sight I there beheld! How can I sufficiently describe the silent sorrow which appeared in the countenance of the afflicted father, and the painful anguish of the tender mother, expecting to be for ever separated from their tender offspring; the distressed maid, wringing her hands in presage of her future wretchedness, and the general cry of the innocent from a dreadful apprehension of the perpetual slavery to which they were doomed! Under a sense of my offence to God, in the persons of his creatures, I acknowledge I purchased eleven, whom I conducted tied two and two to the ship. Being but a small ship, (ninety ton) we soon purchased our cargo, consisting of one hundred and seventy slaves, whom thou mayest, reader, range in thy view, as they were shackled two and two together, pent up within the narrow confines of the main deck, with the complicated distress of sickness, chains, and contempt; deprived of every fond and social tie, and, in a great measure,



these distressed captives. When we reflect that each individual of this number had probably some tender attachment, which was broken by this cruel separation; some parent or wife, who had not an opportunity of mingling tears in a parting embrace; perhaps some infants, or aged parents, whom his labour was to feed, and vigilance protect; themselves under the most dreadful apprehension

R 2

hension

---

measure, reduced to a state of desperation. We had not been a fortnight at sea, before the fatal consequence of this despair appeared; they formed a design of recovering their natural right, LIBERTY, by rising and murdering every man on board; but the goodness of the Almighty rendered their scheme abortive, and his mercy spared us to have time to repent. The plot was discovered; the ring-leader, tied by the two thumbs over the barricade door, at sun-rise received a number of lashes: in this situation he remained till sun-set, exposed to the insults and barbarity of the brutal crew of sailors, with full leave to exercise their cruelty at pleasure. The consequence of this was, that next morning the miserable sufferer was found dead, flayed from the shoulders to the waist. The next victim was a youth, who, from too strong a sense of his misery, refused nourishment, and died disregarded and unnoticed, till the hogs had fed on part of his flesh. Will not christianity blush at this impious sacrilege? May the relation of it serve to call back the struggling remains of humanity in the hearts of those, who, from a love of wealth, partake in any degree of this oppressive gain; and have such an effect on the minds of the sincere, as may be productive of peace, the happy effect of true repentance for past transgressions, and a resolution to renounce all connexion with it for the time to come.



hension of an unknown perpetual slavery; confined within the narrow limits of a vessel, where often several hundreds lie as close as possible. Under these aggravated distresses, they are often reduced to a state of despair, in which many have been frequently killed, and some deliberately put to death under the greatest torture, when they have attempted to rise, in order to free themselves from present misery, and the slavery designed them. Many accounts of this nature might be mentioned; indeed from the vast number of vessels employed in the trade, and the repeated relations in the public prints of Negroes rising on board the vessels from Guinea, it is more than probable, that many such instances occur every year. I shall only mention one example of this kind, by which the reader may judge of the rest; it is in Astley's collection, vol. 2. p. 449, related by John Atkins, surgeon on board admiral Ogle's squadron, of one  
 “ Harding, master of a vessel in which se-  
 “ veral of the men-slaves and women-slaves  
 “ had attempted to rise, in order to recover  
 “ their liberty; some of whom the master,  
 “ of his own authority, sentenced to cruel  
 “ death, making them first eat the heart  
 “ and liver of one of those he had killed.  
 “ The woman he hoisted by the thumbs,  
 “ whipped, and slashed with knives before  
 “ the



“ the other slaves, till she died \*.” As detestable and shocking as this may appear to such whose hearts are not yet hardened by the practice of that cruelty, which the love of wealth

---

\* A memorable instance of some of the dreadful effects of the slave-trade, happened about five years past, on a ship from this port, then at anchor about three miles from shore, near Acra Fort, on the coast of Guinea. They had purchased between four and five hundred Negroes, and were ready to sail for the West Indies. It is customary on board those vessels, to keep the men shackled two by two, each by one leg to a small iron bar; these are every day brought on the deck for the benefit of air; and lest they should attempt to recover their freedom, they are made fast to two common chains, which are extended on each side the main deck; the women and children are loose. This was the situation of the slaves on board this vessel, when it took fire by means of a person who was drawing spirits by the light of a lamp; the cask bursting, the fire spread with so much violence, that in about ten minutes, the sailors, apprehending it impossible to extinguish it before it could reach a large quantity of powder they had on board, concluded it necessary to cast themselves into the sea, as the only chance of saving their lives; and first they endeavoured to loose the chains by which the Negroe men were fastened to the deck; but in the confusion the key being missing, they had but just time to loose one of the chains by wrenching the staple; when the vehemence of the fire so increased, that they all but one man jumped over board, when immediately the fire having gained the powder, the vessel blew up with all the slaves who remained fastened to the one chain, and such others as had not followed the sailors examples. There happened to be three Portugueze vessels in sight, who, with others from the shore, putting out their boats,



wealth by degrees introduceth into the human mind, it will not be strange to those who have been concerned or employed in the trade.

Now here arises a necessary query to those who hold the balance of justice, and who must be accountable to God for the use they have made of it, That as the principles on which the British constitution is founded, are so favourable to the common rights of mankind, how it has happened that the laws which countenance this iniquitous traffic, have obtained the sanction of the legislature? and that the executive part of the government should so long shut their ears to continual reports of the barbarities perpetrated against this unhappy people, and leave the trading subjects at liberty to trample on the most precious rights of others, even without a rebuke? Why are the masters of vessels thus suffered to be the sovereign arbiters of the lives of the miserable Negroes, and allowed  
with

---

boards, took up about two hundred and fifty of those poor souls who remained alive; of which number, about fifty died on shore, being mostly of those who were fettered together by iron shackles, which, as they jumped into the sea, had broke their legs, and these fractures being inflamed by so long a struggle in the sea, probably mortified, which occasioned the death of every one that was so wounded. The two hundred remaining alive, were soon disposed of, for account of the owners to other purchasers.



with impunity thus to destroy (may I not properly say, *to murder*) their fellow-creatures; and that by means so cruel, as cannot be even related but with shame and horror?

C H A P.



## C H A P. XIII.

USAGE of the Negroes, when they arrive in the West Indies. An hundred thousand Negroes brought from Guinea every year to the English colonies. The number of Negroes who die in the passage and seasoning. These are, properly speaking, murdered by the prosecution of this infamous traffic. Remarks on its dreadful *effects and tendency*.

WHEN the vessels arrive at their destined port in the colonies, the poor Negroes are to be disposed of to the planters; and here they are again exposed naked, without any distinction of sexes, to the brutal examination of their purchasers; and this, it may well be judged, is, to many, another occasion of deep distress. Add to this, that near connexions must now again be separated, to go with their several purchasers; this must be deeply affecting to all, but such whose hearts are seared by the love of gain. Mothers are seen hanging over their daughters, bedewing their naked breasts with tears, and daughters clinging to their parents,



rents, not knowing what new stage of distress must follow their separation, or whether they shall ever meet again. And here what sympathy, what commiseration, do they meet with? Why, indeed, if they will not separate as readily as their owners think proper, the whipper is called for, and the lash exercised upon their naked bodies, till obliged to part. Can any human heart, which is not become callous by the practice of such cruelties, be unconcerned, even at the relation of such grievous affliction, to which this oppressed part of our species are subjected.

In a book, printed in Liverpool, called *The Liverpool Memorandum*, which contains, amongst other things, an account of the trade of that port, there is an exact list of the vessels employed in the Guinea trade, and of the number of slaves imported in each vessel; by which it appears that in the year 1753, the number imported to America by one hundred and one vessels belonging to that port, amounted to upwards of thirty thousand; and from the number of vessels employed by the African company in London and Bristol, we may, with some degree of certainty, conclude, there are one hundred thousand Negroes purchased and brought on board our ships yearly from the coast of Africa. This is confirmed in Ander-



son's history of Trade and Commerce, lately printed; where it is said, \* "That Eng-  
 " land supplies her American colonies with  
 " Negroe slaves, amounting in number to  
 " above one hundred thousand every year."  
 When the vessels are full freighted with slaves, they sail for our plantations in America, and may be two or three months in the voyage; during which time, from the filth and stench that is among them, distempers frequently break out, which carry off commonly a fifth, a fourth, yea sometimes a third or more of them: so that taking all the slaves together, that are brought on board our ships yearly, one may reasonably suppose, that at least ten thousand of them die on the voyage. And in a printed account of the state of the Negroes in our plantations, it is supposed that a fourth part, more or less, die at the different islands, in what is called the seasoning. Hence it may be presumed, that at a moderate computation of the slaves who are purchased by our African merchants in a year, near thirty thousand die upon the voyage, and in the seasoning. Add to this, the prodigious number who are killed in the incursions and intestine wars, by which the Negroes procure the number of slaves wanted to load the vessels. How  
 dreadful

---

\* Appendix to Anderson's history, p. 68.



dreadful then is this slave-trade, whereby so many thousands of our fellow creatures, free by nature, endued with the same rational faculties, and called to be heirs of the same salvation with us, lose their lives, and are, truly and properly speaking, murdered every year! For it is not necessary, in order to convict a man of murder, to make it appear that he had an *intention* to commit murder; whoever does, by unjust force or violence, deprive another of his liberty, and, while he hath him in his power, continues so to oppress him by cruel treatment, as eventually to occasion his death, is actually guilty of murder. It is enough to make a thoughtful person tremble, to think what a load of guilt lies upon our nation on this account; and that the blood of thousands of poor innocent creatures, murdered every year in the prosecution of this wicked trade, cries aloud to Heaven for vengeance. Were we to hear or read of a nation that destroyed every year, in some other way, as many human creatures as perish in this trade, we should certainly consider them as a very bloody, barbarous people; if it be alledged, that the legislature hath encouraged, and still does encourage this trade. It is answered, that no legislature on earth can alter the nature of things, so as to make that to be right which is contrary to the law of God,



(the supreme Legislator and Governor of the world) and opposeth the promulgation of the Gospel of *peace on earth, and good will to man*. Injustice may be methodized and established by law, but still it will be injustice, as much as it was before; though its being so established may render men more insensible of the guilt, and more bold and secure in the perpetration of it.

---

#### C H A P. XIV.

**OBSERVATIONS** on the disposition and capacity of the Negroes: Why thought inferior to that of the Whites. Affecting instances of the slavery of the Negroes. Reflections thereon.

**D**OUBTS may arise in the minds of some, whether the foregoing accounts, relating to the natural capacity and good disposition of the inhabitants of Guinea, and of the violent manner in which they are said to be torn from their native land, are to be depended upon; as those Negroes who  
are



are brought to us, are not heard to complain, and do but seldom manifest such a docility and quickness of parts, as is agreeable thereto. But those who make these objections, are desired to note the many discouragements the poor Africans labour under, when brought from their native land. Let them consider, that those afflicted strangers, though in an *enlightened Christian country*, have yet but little opportunity or encouragement to exert and improve their natural talents: They are constantly employed in servile labour; and the abject condition in which we see them, naturally raises an idea of a superiority in ourselves; whence we are apt to look upon them as an ignorant and contemptible part of mankind. Add to this, that they meet with very little encouragement of freely conversing with such of the Whites, as might impart instruction to them. It is a fondness for wealth, for authority, or honour, which prompts most men in their endeavours to excell; but these motives can have little influence upon the minds of the Negroes; few of them having any reasonable prospect of any other than a state of slavery; so that, though their natural capacities were ever so good, they have neither inducement or opportunity to exert them to advantage: This naturally tends to depress their minds, and sink their spirits into habits  
of



of idleness and sloth, which they would, in all likelihood, have been free from, had they stood upon an equal footing with the white people. They are suffered, with impunity, to cohabit together, without being married; and to part, when solemnly engaged to one another as man and wife; notwithstanding the moral and religious laws of the land, strictly prohibiting such practices. This naturally tends to beget apprehensions in the most thoughtful of those people, that we look upon them as a lower race, not worthy of the same care, nor liable to the same rewards and punishments as ourselves. Nevertheless it may with truth be said, that both amongst those who have obtained their freedom, and those who remain in servitude, some have manifested a strong sagacity and an exemplary uprightness of heart. If this hath not been generally the case with them, is it a matter of surprize? Have we not reason to make the same complaint of many white servants, when discharged from our service, though many of them have had much greater opportunities of knowledge and improvement than the blacks; who, even when free, labour under the same difficulties as before: having but little access to, and intercourse with, the most reputable white people, they remain confined within their former limits  
of



of conversation. And if they seldom complain of the unjust and cruel usage they have received, in being forced from their native country, &c. it is not to be wondered at; it being a considerable time after their arrival amongst us, before they can speak our language; and, by the time they are able to express themselves, they have great reason to believe, that little or no notice would be taken of their complaints: yet let any person enquire of those who were capable of reflection, before they were brought from their native land, and he will hear such affecting relations, as, if not lost to the common feelings of humanity, will sensibly affect his heart. The case of a poor Negroe, not long since brought from Guinea, is a recent instance of this kind. From his first arrival, he appeared thoughtful and dejected, frequently dropping tears when taking notice of his master's children, the cause of which was not known till he was able to speak English, when the account he gave of himself was, “ That he had a wife and children in  
 “ his own country; that some of these being  
 “ sick and thirsty, he went in the night  
 “ time, to fetch water at a spring, where  
 “ he was violently seized and carried away  
 “ by persons who lay in wait to catch men,  
 “ from whence he was transported to Ame-  
 “ rica. The remembrance of his family,  
 “ friends,



“ friends, and other connections, left behind,  
 “ which he never expected to see any more,  
 “ were the principal cause of his dejection  
 “ and grief.” Many cases, equally affecting,  
 might be here mentioned; but one more in-  
 stance, which fell under the notice of a per-  
 son of credit, will suffice. One of these  
 wretched creatures, then about 50 years of  
 age, informed him, “ That being violently  
 “ torn from a wife and several children in  
 “ Guinea, he was sold in Jamaica, where  
 “ never expecting to see his native land or  
 “ family any more, he joined himself to a  
 “ Negroe woman, by whom he had two  
 “ children: after some years, it suiting the  
 “ interest of his owner to remove him, he  
 “ was separated from this second wife and  
 “ children, and brought to South Carolina,  
 “ where, expecting to spend the remainder  
 “ of his days, he engaged with a third wife,  
 “ by whom he had another child; but here  
 “ the same consequence of one man being  
 “ subject to the will and pleasure of another  
 “ man occurring, he was separated from  
 “ this last wife and child, and brought into  
 “ this country, where he remained a slave.”

Can any, whose mind is not rendered quite  
 obdurate by the love of wealth, hear these  
 relations, without being deeply touched  
 with sympathy and sorrow? And doubtless  
 the case of many, very many of these af-  
 flicted



flicted people, upon enquiry, would be found to be attended with circumstances equally tragical and aggravating. And if we enquire of those Negroes, who were brought away from their native country when children, we shall find most of them to have been stolen away, when abroad from their parents, on the roads, in the woods, or watching their corn-fields. Now, you that have studied the book of conscience, and you that are learned in the law, what will you say to such deplorable cases? When, and how, have these oppressed people forfeited their liberty? Does not justice loudly call for its being restored to them? Have they not the same right to demand it, as any of us should have, if we had been violently snatched by pirates from our native land? Is it not the duty of every dispenser of justice, who is not forgetful of his own humanity, to remember that these are men, and to declare them free? Where instances of such cruelty frequently occur, and are neither enquired into, nor redressed, by those whose duty it is *to seek judgment, and relieve the oppressed*, Isaiah i. 17. what can be expected, but that the groans and cries of these sufferers will reach Heaven; and what shall we do *when God riseth up? and when he visiteth*, what will ye answer him? *Did not he that made them, make us; and did not one fashion us in the womb?* Job xxxi. 14.

T

C H A P.



## C H A P X I V .

THE expediency of a general freedom being granted to the Negroes considered. *Reasons* why it might be productive of advantage and *safety to the Colonies.*

IT is scarce to be doubted, but that the foregoing accounts will beget in the heart of the considerate readers an earnest desire to see a stop put to this complicated evil; but the objection with many is, What shall be done with those Negroes already imported, and born in our families? Must they be sent to Africa? That would be to expose them, in a strange land, to greater difficulties than many of them labour under at present. To set them suddenly free here, would be perhaps attended with no less difficulty; for, undisciplined as they are in religion and virtue, they might give a loose to those evil habits, which the fear of a master would have restrained. These are objections, which weigh with many well disposed people, and it must be granted, these are difficulties in the way; nor can any general change



change be made, or reformation effected, without some; but the difficulties are not so great but that they may be surmounted. If the government was so considerate of the iniquity and danger attending on this practice, as to be willing to seek a remedy, doubtless the Almighty would bless this good intention, and such methods would be thought of, as would not only put an end to the unjust oppression of the Negroes, but might bring them under regulations, that would enable them to become profitable members of society; for the furtherance of which, the following proposals are offered to consideration: That all farther importation of slaves be absolutely prohibited; and as to those born among us, after serving so long as may appear to be equitable, let them by law be declared free. Let every one, thus set free, be enrolled in the county courts, and be obliged to be a resident, during a certain number of years, within the said county, under the care of the overseers of the poor. Thus being, in some sort, still under the direction of governors, and the notice of those who were formerly acquainted with them, they would be obliged to act the more circumspectly, and make proper use of their liberty, and their children



dren would have an opportunity of obtaining such instructions, as are necessary to the common occasions of life; and thus both parents and children might gradually become useful members of the community. And further, where the nature of the country would permit, as certainly the uncultivated condition of our southern and most western colonies easily would, suppose a small tract of land were assigned to every Negroe family, and they obliged to live upon and improve it, (when not hired out to work for the white people) this would encourage them to exert their abilities, and become industrious subjects. Hence, both planters and tradesmen would be plentifully supplied with chearful and willing-minded labourers, much vacant land would be cultivated, the produce of the country be justly increased, the taxes for the support of government lessened to individuals, by the increase of taxables, and the Negroes, instead of being an object of terror\*, as they certainly must be to the governments

---

\* The hard usage the Negroes meet with in the plantations, and the great disproportion between them and the white people, will always be a just cause of terror. In Jamaica, and some parts of South-Carolina, it is supposed that there are fifteen blacks to one white.



vernments where their numbers are great, would become interested in their safety and welfare.

---

## C H A P. XV.

**ANSWER** to a mistaken opinion, that the warmth of the climate in the West-Indies, will not permit white people to labour there. No complaint of disability in the whites, in that respect, in the settlement of the islands. Idleness and diseases prevailed, as the use of slaves increased. *The great* advantage which might accrue to the British nation, if the slave trade was entirely laid aside, and a fair and friendly commerce established through the whole coast of Africa.

**I**T is frequently offered as an argument, in vindication of the use of Negroe slaves, that the warmth of the climate in the West Indies will not permit white people to labour in the culture of the land: but upon an acquaintance with the nature of the climate, and its effects upon such labouring  
white



white people, as are prudent and moderate in labour, and the use of spirituous liquors, this will be found to be a mistaken opinion. Those islands were, at first, wholly cultivated by white men; the encouragement they then met with, for a long course of years, was such as occasioned a great increase of people. Richard Ligon, in his history of Barbadoes, where he resided from the year 1647 to 1650, about 24 years after his first settlement, writes, “ that, there were then  
 “ fifty thousand souls on that island, be-  
 “ sides Negroes; and that though the wea-  
 “ ther was very hot, yet not so scalding  
 “ but that servants, both christians and  
 “ slaves, laboured ten hours a day.” By other accounts we gather, that the white people have since decreased to less than one half the number which was there at that time; and by relations of the first settlements of the other islands, we do not meet with any complaints of unfitness in the white people for labour there, before slaves were introduced. The island of Hispaniola, which is one of the largest of those islands, was at first planted by the Buccaneers, a set of hardy laborious men, who continued so for a long course of years; till following the example of their neighbours, in the purchase and use of Negroe slaves, idleness and excess prevailing, debility and disease natural-  
 ly



ly succeeded, and have ever since continued. If, under proper regulations, liberty was proclaimed through the colonies, the Negroes, from dangerous, grudging, half-fed slaves, might become able, willing-minded labourers. And if there was not a sufficient number of these to do the necessary work, a competent number of labouring people might be procured from Europe, which affords numbers of poor distressed objects, who, if not overlooked, with proper usage, might, in several respects, better answer every good purpose in performing the necessary labour in the islands, than the slaves now do.

A farther considerable advantage might accrue to the British nation in general, if the slave trade was laid aside, by the cultivation of a fair, friendly, and humane commerce with the Africans; without which, it is not possible the inland trade of that country should ever be extended to the degree it is capable of; for while the spirit of butchery and making slaves of each other, is promoted by the Europeans amongst the Negroes, no mutual confidence can take place; nor will the Europeans be able to travel with safety into the heart of their country, to form and cement such commercial friendships and alliances, as might be necessary to introduce the arts and sciences amongst

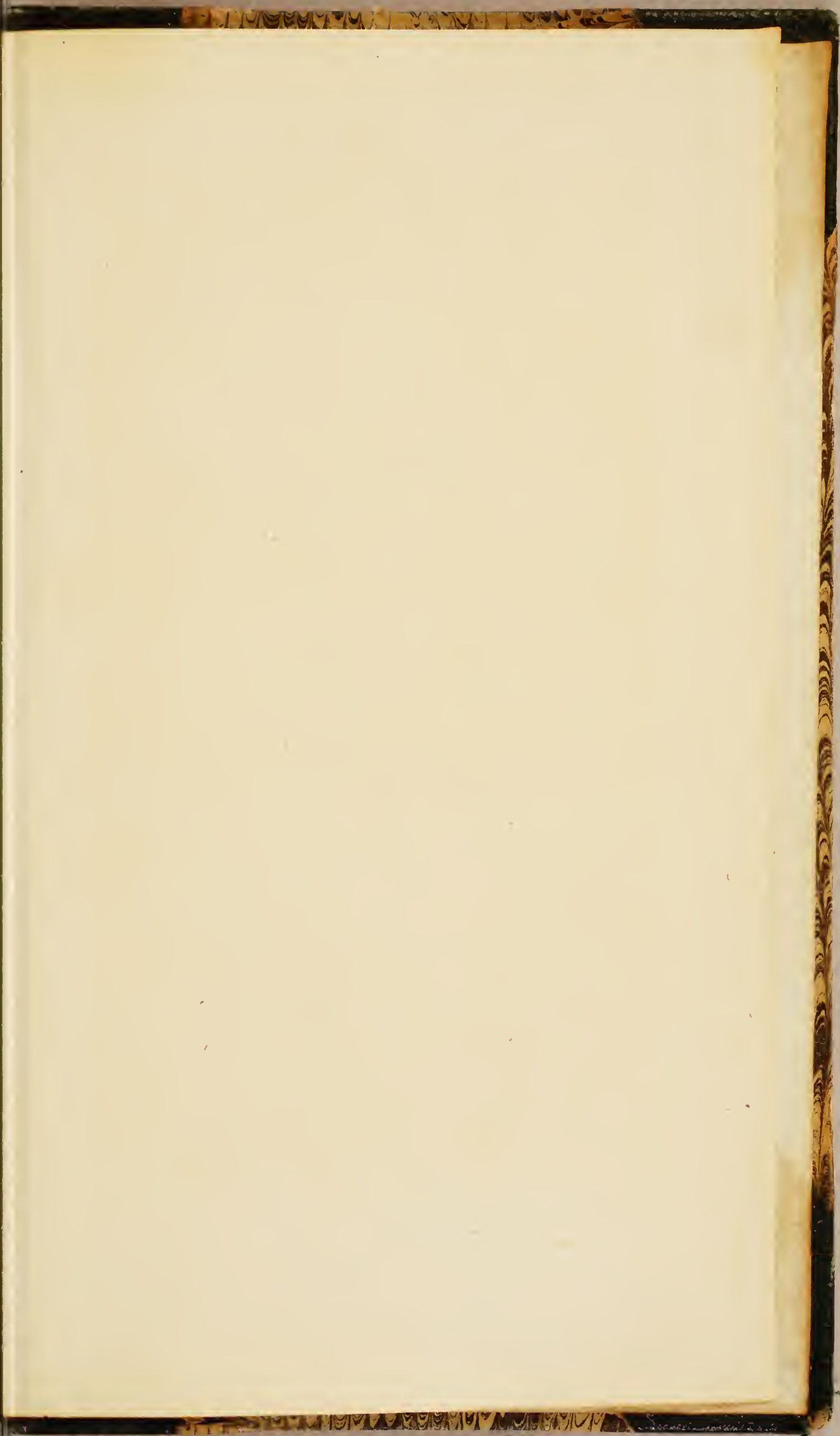


amongst them, and engage their attention to instruction in the principles of the christian religion, which is the only sure foundation of every social virtue. Africa has about ten thousand miles of sea coast, and extends in depth near three thousand miles from east to west, and as much from north to south, stored with vast treasures of materials, necessary for the trade and manufactures of Great-Britain; and from its climate, and the fruitfulness of its soil, capable, under proper management, of producing in the greatest plenty, most of the commodities which are imported into Europe from those parts of America subject to the English government\*; and as, in return, they would take our manufactures, the advantages of this trade would soon become so great, that it is evident this subject merits the regard and attention of the government.

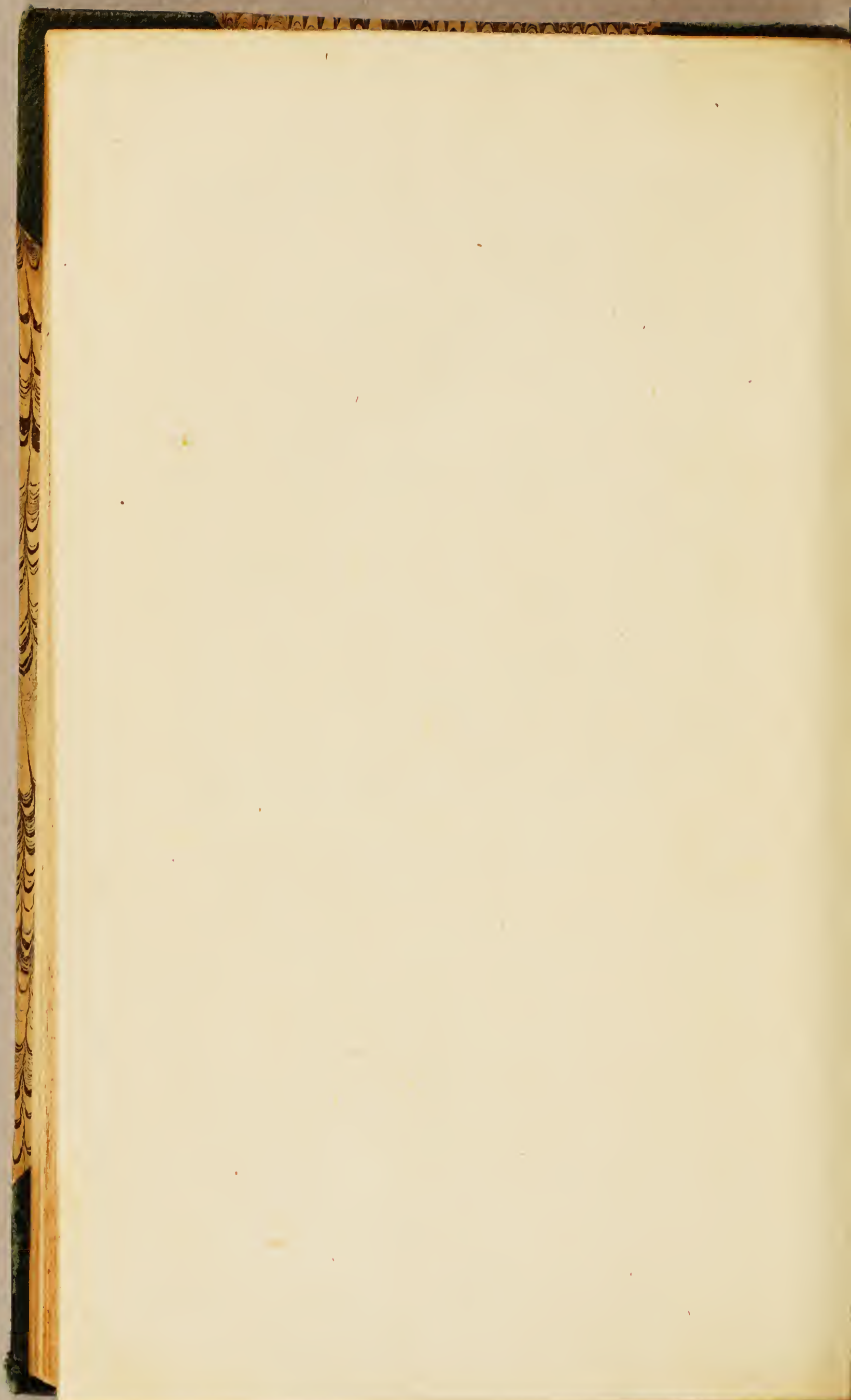
---

\* See note, page 109.











D772  
B4655  
cop. 2



